

# WESTERN AVENUE PLAN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## ***A plan was recently completed for Western Avenue. What does it propose?***

The West Side Main Streets Plan, completed in summer 2014, is a market-based strategic revitalization plan for Lincolnway West and Western Avenue. The plan serves as a guide to business and property owners, residents, developers, the City, and others in making investment, land use, and design decisions along these two corridors.

For Western Avenue, the plan proposes focusing retail and commercial development into concentrated areas, expanding public and park spaces, and restriping the street's travel lanes to promote safety and private investment. The full plan may be viewed online at [www.southbendin.gov/corridors](http://www.southbendin.gov/corridors).



***Development Concept for Western Avenue***



## ***Western Avenue was just added to a tax increment financing (TIF) district. What does this mean?***

Adding Western Avenue properties to the City's River West Development Area allows additional public resources (tax increment financing funding) to be spent to improve the corridor. A tax increment financing district collects the increased property tax revenue from new development and uses it to pay for improved infrastructure or for other costs necessary to encourage private investment. Placement in a tax increment financing district does not directly change the amount of property taxes a property pays, nor does it affect zoning, the ability to buy or sell the property, or property insurance rates.



## ***Will the City be buying property as part of the proposed improvements?***

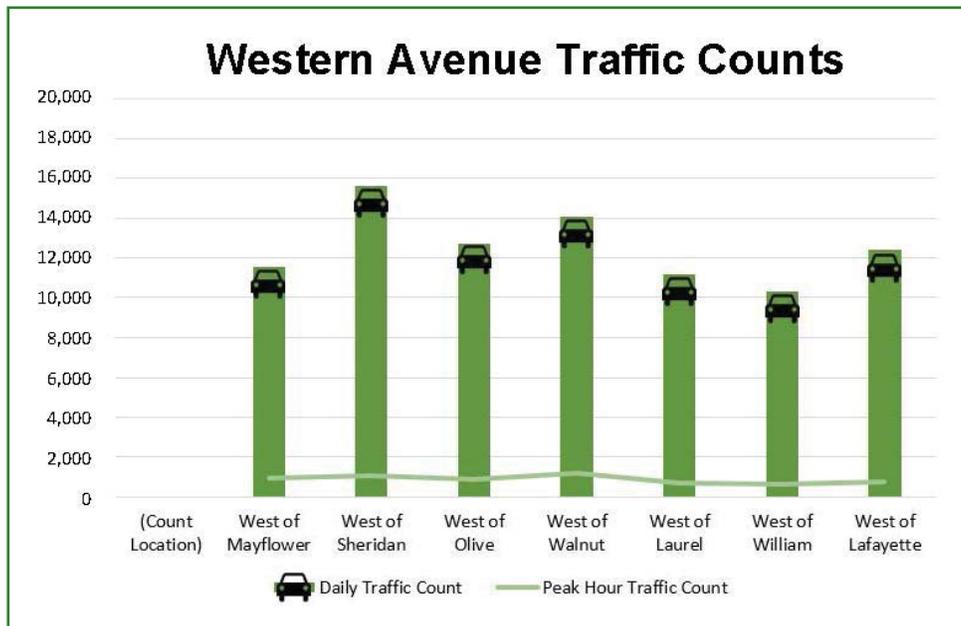
No, except in some rare cases where park or other public gathering spaces are proposed. Any property acquisition would be done on a voluntary basis; the City will not use eminent domain.



**The West Side Main Streets Plan says the travel lane striping may change on Western Avenue. What is the concept, and will it create traffic delays along the street?**

To support safety and neighborhood investment, the plan proposes that most of Western Avenue be converted to three lanes (one lane in each direction with a dedicated left-turn lane) with on-street parking on both sides. As space and demand dictates, bicycle facilities will be added. Similar lane striping treatments have been completed recently on Lafayette Boulevard downtown and on Jefferson Boulevard in the East Bank.

A three-lane configuration will handle the traffic on Western Avenue. Depending on the segment, this street carries about 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day. Across the country, similar three-lane reconfigurations have been successfully implemented on streets carrying up to 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day. Experience from other cities also shows that streets carrying up to 1,500 vehicles in their peak hour (the hour of the day with the most traffic) can be converted to three lanes without concern for causing additional delays. The peak hour traffic counts along Western Avenue are well below this 1,500-vehicle standard.



A more extensive traffic analysis will be completed to confirm that the concept for the lane striping will not cause any unreasonable traffic delay. Detailed engineering will then be done to refine the concept as necessary, and plans will be prepared and presented to the public for review in early 2015. The actual changes to the lane striping are expected to be done during the 2015 construction season.



**Where may I find more information on the West Side Main Streets Plan and on Western Avenue revitalization efforts?**

For additional information, contact the City of South Bend Department of Community Investment at (574) 235-9371 or visit [www.southbendin.gov/corridors](http://www.southbendin.gov/corridors).



"Smart Streets" is an effort to improve the role of streets within South Bend. Projects within this initiative utilize the "Complete Streets" philosophy which advocates for the design of streets to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

