



Laporte Ave.

Fishback Ave. to Wood St. Transportation Improvements

Public Engagement Summary

Project Overview

The City of Fort Collins is proposing to restripe Laporte Ave. from Fishback Ave. to Wood St. with buffered bike lanes in summer 2024. On-street parking will have to be removed on both sides of this section of Laporte Ave. to provide enough space for buffered bike lanes.

Filling the gap in the bicycle network on Laporte Ave. from Fishback Ave. to Wood St. is a high priority recommendation in the City's [Active Modes Plan](#). The Active Modes Plan recommends retaining parking on one side of the street and adding conventional bike lanes on this section of Laporte Ave. However, after analyzing the corridor further, the City is proposing buffered bike lanes and parking removal on both sides for several reasons:

- Buffered bike lanes provide additional space between vehicular traffic and people riding bikes, offering greater comfort for bicyclists of a wider range of ages and abilities.
- The City will not have to grind off existing roadway striping. This reduces project costs and construction time.
- The road centerline can remain at the crown of the road.
- Current street standards for arterials, such as Laporte Ave., do not include on-street parking.
- Removing parking on both sides will aid snow removal. It is more difficult for plow drivers to remove snow from bike lanes that are adjacent to on-street parking, and vehicles track snow out into the bike lane when leaving on-street parking spaces.
- Parking on only one side of the street could induce midblock pedestrian crossings throughout the corridor for residents and visitors who live on the opposite side of the street.
- Parking available on adjacent blocks is expected to be sufficient to meet demand.

The City's Parking Services Department conducted a parking study Thursday, September 7 – Saturday, September 9, 2023 in the project area. Vehicles parked on-street were counted in the 7 – 8 a.m., 11 a.m. – 12 p.m., 2 – 3 p.m., and 6 – 7 p.m. time periods each day. Based on the parking study, this section of Laporte Ave. hosts less than 20 unique vehicles at any given time, with each block hosting an average of three vehicles. Adjacent blocks are rarely over 50% occupancy.

This project will fill a critical gap in bike facilities on Laporte Ave. There are currently bike lanes on Laporte Ave. from Wood St. to College Ave. and from Sunset St. to Laporte's western terminus. In 2024, the City will complete construction of raised separated bike lanes on Laporte Ave. from Fishback Ave. to Sunset St. as part of the [Laporte Corridor project](#). Filling the

remaining gap in bike facilities on Laporte Ave. will improve connectivity to Poudre High School, Poudre Community Academy, Lincoln Middle School, Putnam Elementary, Fullana Learning Center, downtown, CSU's Foothills Campus, businesses along Laporte Ave., the future Salud Family Health Center, and other key destinations.

Winter 2024 Engagement Methods

Postcards

FC Moves staff mailed postcards to all residents and property owners within ½ mile of the project corridor. The postcard included a link to the [project website](#), a project overview, and invitation to attend the neighborhood meeting. Postcards were received 2+ weeks in advance of the neighborhood meeting.

Sandwich Boards

Sandwich boards with project fact sheets were placed in the project area on March 18 (three days in advance of the neighborhood meeting). One was placed on the west side of Roosevelt St. just north of Laporte Ave., and one on the south side of Laporte Ave. just west of Mack St. Fact sheets included a link to the project website, a project overview, and information about the neighborhood meeting. The back side of the fact sheet included information about the Laporte Corridor project from Fishback Ave. to Sunset St.

Partner Emails

Staff emailed the Putnam Elementary School principal and PSD Construction Project Coordinator to inform them of the project. They did not provide any feedback on the project. Staff also emailed Stodgy Brewing Company, The Fox Den: No Waste Café & Roastery, and Your Best Day Ever to inform them of the project based on guidance from the City's Business Liaison for Capital Projects. All three agreed to put out project fact sheets in their businesses starting on March 14.

Neighborhood Meeting

FC Moves staff hosted a hybrid meeting with a Zoom option and in-person participation at Putnam Elementary School on Thursday, March 21, from 6 – 7 p.m. FC Moves staff gave a PowerPoint presentation and invited residents to ask questions and provide feedback. The meeting was recorded and posted on the project website.

Public Questions/Feedback and Staff Responses

Community members' questions and feedback about the project and City staff responses are summarized below. Community members provided feedback through the following channels:

- 29 attended the neighborhood meeting (22 in person, 7 online)
- 10 emailed
- 3 called and requested an in person meeting

- 20 provided feedback on the Laporte Ave. project during the draft bicycle network recommendations review for the Active Modes Plan in February 2022

Bike Facilities

- Several residents expressed support for improving the bike facilities along Laporte Ave.
 - All 20 community members who commented on the Laporte Ave. project during the draft bicycle network recommendations review for the Active Modes Plan expressed support for the project.
 - Several residents said that they would bike on Laporte Ave. if it had bike facilities, but they don't currently because they don't feel safe.
 - This is a critical route for students of multiple schools, accessing businesses to the west, commuting downtown, and accessing mountain/gravel/road biking in northwest Fort Collins.
 - The route is an especially important bike route in the winter since it is plowed sooner and better than parallel routes.
 - Buffered bike lanes could also improve comfort for pedestrians since the sidewalks are so narrow, especially in places with no grass or landscaping between the sidewalk and the street.
- Why isn't the City continuing the raised separated bike lanes on this section of Laporte Ave.?
 - *Staff response: Raised separated bike lanes are much more expensive than in-street bike lanes. West of Fishback Ave., the roadway was not wide enough to stripe bike lanes in street. Since the City had to acquire right-of-way and reconstruct bridges from Fishback to Sunset, we constructed the ultimate configuration of raised separated bike lanes. Striping in-street buffered bike lanes on Laporte from Fishback to Wood will allow us to close the gap in bike facilities in the near term at relatively low cost. It will be 20+ years before this section of Laporte Ave. is prioritized for raised separated bike lanes. The numerous driveways also pose a challenge to constructing separated bike lanes.*
- Bike lanes on Laporte Ave. are unnecessary because there are good alternative bike routes such as Mountain Ave.
 - *Staff response: One of the key themes we heard from the public during engagement for the Active Modes Plan was the desire for more direct routes. While Mountain Ave. is a great bike route, it requires out of direction travel or added street crossings for many residents to get where they want to go. One of the goals adopted in the Active Modes Plan is to*

achieve 50% active modes share of all trips taken by Fort Collins residents by 2032. This goal is key to achieving the City's broader climate, safety, and equity goals. To achieve this, it needs to be equally convenient, safe, and comfortable to bike or walk as it is to drive a car for short trips.

- Biking on Laporte Ave. will always be unsafe.
 - *Staff response: Installing bicycle lanes is expected to reduce vehicular traffic speeds and improve safety for all road users. Installing bicycle lanes have demonstrated up to a 60% reduction in crashes based on research conducted for the Federal Highway Administration.*
- Are there any plans to widen the road or purchase right-of-way in this section of Laporte Ave. to add the bike facilities?
 - *Staff response: No, the City will not widen the road or purchase right-of-way on Laporte Ave. between Fishback Ave. and Wood St. as part of this project. The buffered bike lanes will be striped within the existing roadway.*
- Are there any plans for a crossing improvement at Roosevelt and Laporte?
 - *Staff response: Yes, the Active Modes Plan recommends a rectangular rapid flashing beacon for this crossing as a high priority recommendation, but the improvement is outside of the scope of this project. We don't have funding for the improvement this year.*

Pedestrian Facilities

- The sidewalks on Laporte Ave. are narrow and in poor condition.
 - *Staff response: The City uses the Pedestrian Needs Assessment to prioritize sidewalk improvements. This section of Laporte Ave. is not on the City's 2024 – 2025 list for sidewalk improvements, but the Engineering Department will evaluate the corridor. Based on the Pedestrian Needs Assessment, the sidewalks along the corridor range from medium to highest priority and range in condition from fair to poor. While multiple factors impact prioritization, the City is generally focused first on filling gaps in the sidewalk network along arterial roadways.*

Shields/Laporte Intersection

- Consider striping sharrows (shared lane markings) in the through lanes instead of the right turn lanes since many cars turn right on red, especially during the morning rush hour, and traveling straight from the right turn lane would point cyclists towards the curb.
 - *Staff response: We will stripe sharrows in the through lanes instead of the right turn lanes.*
- Consider adding bike boxes on Laporte at Shields.

- *Staff response: This would require striping bike lanes all the way through to the intersection and prohibiting right turns on red. Currently, traffic volumes necessitate dedicated left and right turn lanes and allowing right turn on red. Ultimately, it would be preferable to create a protected intersection for cyclists at Shields and Laporte but that would require a larger intersection reconstruction that is beyond the scope of this project.*
- Consider changing the signal timing at the intersection. The green phase is very short for east-west traffic.
 - *Staff response: The Traffic Operations Department will evaluate the signal timing. The signal is a high priority for replacement, which could allow for additional improvements that are beyond the scope of this project.*

Parking

- Several residents expressed support for removing on-street parking.
 - They shared stories of vehicles getting hit when parked on-street on Laporte Ave. and that they now avoid parking there.
 - Parked cars obstruct visibility, especially close to the Shields intersection. Removing on-street parking will make the road safer for all users.
 - Having a bike lane next to on-street parking can feel dangerous if cars are pulling out or opening doors without checking for bikes.
 - We need to get away from the idea that the City will provide free car storage on City streets, whether that's in front of where we live or where we travel to.
- Several residents expressed concern about losing on-street parking on Laporte Ave. and diverting parking to adjacent blocks.
 - *Staff response: Based on the parking study conducted in September 2023, parking available on adjacent blocks is expected to be sufficient to meet demand.*
- Would the City consider removing parking on only one side of the street?
 - *Staff response: The City is proposing to remove parking on both sides for several reasons, articulated in the project overview on page 1.*
- Several residents on the east end of the corridor shared that they are already feeling the pressure of parking needs for businesses along Laporte Ave.
 - *Staff response: On-street parking will be allowed temporarily on Forney St. during construction of the Laporte corridor project from Fishback Ave. to Sunset St. Filling the gap in bicycle facilities on Laporte Ave. from Wood St. to Sunset St. should make it possible for more residents to bike to these businesses.*

- Would the City consider creating a residential parking permit zone for the area?
 - *Staff response: This area is outside of the Residential Parking Permit Program (RP3) management area, per City Code. For areas within the RP3 management area, a parking study must show parking occupancy of at least 70% before Parking Services will explore the potential for a new RP3 zone with the neighborhood.*
- What City department should residents reach out to about constructing a driveway?
 - *Staff response: Residents can submit a sidewalk and drive approach permit to the Engineering Department. More information, including the permit application are available at <https://www.fcgov.com/engineering/inspection>.*
- Will the City provide dispensation for homeowners to mitigate the impact of the project and allow them to make improvements such as constructing a driveway?
 - *Staff response: No, that is not within the scope of the project.*
- Are delivery vehicles and work vehicles allowed to temporarily block the bike lane?
 - *Staff response: The City does not have the capacity to enforce the temporary blockage of a bike lane, such as by a delivery truck. Blocking the bike lane for a longer period of time requires a right-of-way [encroachment permit](#).*
- Would the City consider adding red curbs to indicate that parking is not allowed after on-street parking is removed?
 - *Staff response: The City tries to limit the use of red curbing. It is challenging to maintain. It is illegal to park in bike lanes in the City whether or not there is red curb. We hope adding “Fort Collins bikeway: right lane bike only” signage will help emphasize the change.*

Traffic Speeds

- Narrowing travel lanes and adding buffered bike lanes should help to reduce traffic speeds.
- Would the City consider reducing posted speed limits to 25 mph on this section of Laporte Ave.?
 - *Staff response: The Traffic Operations Department will evaluate lowering the speed limit on this section of Laporte Ave.*

Ice Build Up

- A resident expressed concern that an ice dam forms at the bottom of their and their neighbor's driveways and that the ice could become a hazard for cyclists if buffered bike lanes are installed.
 - *Staff response: Streets Department staff visited the site and noted that there wasn't any staining in the street or gutter that is indicative of ponding that occurs when there are flow issues. They didn't identify any concrete issues that need to be fixed. Snow likely gets built up in the flow line because snow is only removed from the through lanes on Laporte Ave. since there is on-street parking. This blocks flow and leads to ice build-up. It's possible that removing on-street parking could help by allowing snow to be removed from curb to curb. But it could make the situation worse if more snow is concentrated in this location since there is no place for snow storage on the back of the sidewalk. Staff will monitor the area.*

Data Collection

- Will before/after data be collected and analyzed to ensure the project has the intended outcome?
 - *Staff response: Yes, bicycle counts, vehicular travel speeds, crash data, and parking data will be analyzed before and after the project.*