

Olentangy Trail UPDATES



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

RECREATION AND PARKS
DEPARTMENT



Olentangy Trail Section 4(f) Comment Responses

Question 1: How many bridge supports will go into the river and where are they being constructed?

City Response: The bridges will span over the river without any piers in the water.

Question 2: The community accesses the Trail and parks for a variety of uses daily. Closing off parts of the trail, Clinton-Como Park and Northmoor Park, even intermittently, for several months to work on a project with no benefits cannot be supported.

City Response: Access to both parks will be maintained at all times throughout construction, along with all the facilities at both parks. At Northmoor Park, only a small (95') section of the trail will be closed for a short period of time (two weeks or less) when the intersection with the new section of trail is constructed. During this time, a compacted aggregate bypass will be provided during that closure to maintain continuity of the trail. At Clinton-Como Park, a detour of the section of trail that is being closed will be provided, but a section of trail must be closed in order to raise the trail high enough for the proposed bridge to clear the 100 year flood elevation. The parking lot, picnic pavilion, playground, etc., will all remain open during construction. No impacts to the Clinton-Como Park parking lot will occur, but the Northmoor Park parking lot will be periodically used for equipment and material storage. This is being done to minimize impacts to the park green space.

Question 3: Will the people who live on Riverside Drive have access to their driveways during construction?

City Response: Access will be maintained for all property owners during construction. No closures or blockages of driveways will be permitted during construction.

Question 4: Why isn't there a temporary gravel path alongside the existing path like what is planned at Northmoor Park?

City Response: The existing path disruption at Northmoor Park will be less than a two-week duration and is only needed to construct the intersection with the new section of trail being built as part of this project. The existing path at Clinton-Como Park is adjacent to the bridge construction, which will require excavators, concrete trucks, and other heavy equipment. The existing path at Clinton-Como Park also has to be built up to cross the river, requiring more extensive work. Because of the equipment and materials required to raise the path at Clinton-Como Park, having trail users adjacent to the work area would be a safety issue.

Question 5: Why does the detour follow a cobbled street (Como), and go along a busy circuitous street (Lakeview) rather than a wider, quieter, more direct road with ready trail access (Pacemont)?

City Response: The detour route was designed to be as direct as possible. The only feasible route to avoid the brick on Como Avenue would be to detour the trail east to High Street, which would be over a mile in length. Lakeview Avenue will only be used at the very west end of the dead-end street and should see very little additional traffic compared to Pacemont Road. Lakeview Avenue has the benefit of leading directly into the parking lot, playground, picnic pavilion and sports courts at Clinton-Como Park.

Question 6: Will there be clear detour signage? Does the City plan on either making a temporary 4 way stop or enhanced signage?

City Response: Temporary signs will be placed marking the detour route for trail users. Changes to the stop signs at the intersections are not planned during this period.

Question 7: What's not clear is whether the existing neighborhood bike route will be maintained during construction. Will Olentangy Trail users still be able to head north into the neighborhoods, following the existing trail route into the alleyways?

City Response: The existing neighborhood route will be maintained during construction, and the alternate route through the neighborhood that is currently in use will still be available after construction is complete.

Question 8: Can honeysuckle removal be included as a part of the project?

City Response: Honeysuckle removal will be done within the construction limits of the path and, where feasible and permitted, can be included as part of the clearing phase of the project.

Question 9: What cultural/environmental studies were conducted by whom, and how can we see/review them?

City Response: The project is federally funded and following the National Environmental Policy Act requirements. As such, all environmental studies completed thus far have been coordinated with the appropriate federal and/or state agency. The approved environmental document and waterway permits will be posted on the project website.

Question 10: The stormwater mitigation should occur where the impervious impacts are occurring not at Anheuser Busch Sports Park. Why not expand the basin at OhioHealth or install pervious pavement at the Northmoor Park parking lot?

City Response: Nearly the entire project is constructed within the 100-year floodplain, and City of Columbus drainage requirements prevent any type of retention or detention basin from being constructed within the flood plain. Pervious pavement at Northmoor Park was not considered due to the high amount of vegetation and mature trees adjacent to the parking lot that would result in debris clogging the pavement. There is no on-site basin for OhioHealth, and the stormwater mitigation for the construction of the OhioHealth campus was completed off-site. The basin at Anheuser Busch Park falls within the same watershed as the project, and modifying it to meet the stormwater mitigation requirements is permitted by the City of Columbus.

Question 11: What precautions are being made to avoid a complete washout of construction work at Clinton-Como Park if we get heavy rains/flooding?

City Response: A stormwater pollution prevention plan is included in the plan set. This plan will include filter fabric fence along the entire length of construction, dandy-bags on all existing and proposed catch basins, concrete washout areas, and many other requirements the contractor will need to meet during construction to prevent contaminants from entering the Olentangy River.

Question 12: How will the boardwalks be maintained when they get flooded and muddy?

City Response: The boardwalks are made of planks with small gaps between to allow the water to drain and not pool on the boardwalk. The boardwalk planks will be concrete and can be powerwashed if mud collection becomes an issue.

Question 13: If the only temporary access to Northmoor Park will be via a gravel path, why not include a paved path to accommodate all bicycle and wheelchair traffic?

City Response: The temporary path is a bypass of a 95-foot section of the existing trail for the construction of the intersection with the new trail. It will be compacted crushed aggregate that will be suitable for bicycles and wheelchairs. Warning signage will be provided ahead of the gravel in both directions. The temporary gravel path will be used for two weeks or less.

Question 14: Is the temporary gravel path a lower stability than the permanent asphalt path? How will it impact skateboarders, roller skaters, roller bladers and scooters? Will the temporary gravel path be compacted enough to provide a surface that is safe to walk, roll, and wheel on?

City Response: The temporary path will be crushed and compacted aggregate that will be suitable for walking and larger wheeled items such as bicycles or wheelchairs, but small-wheeled items such as rollerblades, skateboards and Razor scooters will likely need to walk through the gravel or adjacent grass. While it will be roller compacted, it will not have the same stability as asphalt. Because of this, warning signage will be provided ahead of the gravel in both directions. The temporary gravel path will have a distance of 95 feet and will be used for two weeks or less.

Question 15: Will the Clinton-Como and Northmoor parking lots be closed off for construction equipment and staging? Will park users need to park on the side streets?

City Response: The Clinton-Como Park parking lot will not be used for material or equipment storage and will remain open during construction of the project. The Northmoor Park parking lot is being used for staging to minimize impacts to the green spaces within the park. The parking lot will not be closed during the entirety of construction, but there will be periods when it will be necessary to close the lot and use street parking on Olentangy Boulevard and Northmoor Place.

Question 16: Why are the construction crews allowed to park their vehicles and stage their equipment in Clinton-Como Park, Northmoor Park, and the outfield of the ball field? Won't utilizing the Northmoor Park parking lot effectively close that parking lot? Why can't they use a different location such as the OhioHealth or Kohl's parking lots?

City Response: The Kohl's and OhioHealth parking lots are private property and cannot be used by the contractor for equipment or material storage. At Clinton-Como Park, the existing section of trail that is being closed will be used as a staging area, but there will be no impacts to the parking lot, and all facilities at the park will be available. The parking lot at Northmoor Park is being used as a staging area to keep impacts to the park green space to an absolute minimum. The parking lot will not be closed for the entire duration of the project, but there will be periods of time when the lot will not be available and street parking will need to be utilized.

Question 17: Where will the six trees removed from Clinton-Como Park be mitigated at? How many will be planted for mitigation of these six trees? Also, please explain that the tree numbers are only for trees being cut that are over 12 inch diameter.

City Response: The trees will be planted within Clinton-Como Park, adjacent to the trail on the north and south sides, a minimum of 10' from the edge of pavement for safety purposes. The six trees at Clinton-Como Park will be replaced 1 for 1, but the project as a whole will plant more trees than are being removed. The tree numbers included in the project are for the removal and replacement of all trees regardless of size, and not just for trees over 12" diameter.

*** Only responses to comments regarding impacts to Section 4(f) resources are included in this response form. Comments pertaining to other components of the project area provided in other response documentation.*