

Council Member Matthew Ayer and Village Engineer Chris Ertel, P.E. have prepared the following Q&A document to answer questions received from residents concerning the Mariemont Connector Project. More specifically, the Q&A is focused on the segment from Miami Road east to the terminus where the path will connect behind Mariemont Library to ODOT’s Columbia Connector Project. The Village has received an Ohio Department of Natural Resources Clean Ohio Trails Fund Grant along with the local match from private donations to complete this segment in 2024.

WHY THE PROJECT?

Here in Mariemont, the Murray Path project clearly demonstrated recreational benefits and immense popularity of a shared use path for Mariemont residents and our neighbors. Extending this safe, off-road, shared use path through the Village will further enhance these benefits.

The Project provides not only outdoor recreation but also an alternative means for basic transportation. Every municipality can benefit from a [“15-minute city”](#) vision. The trail also provides a safe, off-road path for students to walk or bike to school.

The Mariemont Connector is also a vital link in the region’s first-ever [urban trail loop](#). This walkable, bikeable loop will be fully separated from roadway traffic, providing a safe and accessible option to gather and be active outdoors while connecting 54 communities. The trail will connect Mariemont residents to the Little Miami Scenic Trail and the Ohio River Trail, much like Murray Path has connected residents to the Wasson Way trail.

WHAT KIND OF PATH?

Residents sometimes visualize a bike highway. However, over 80% of path users are on foot – walkers, dog walkers, seniors, families, strollers, recreational runners, running groups, MCSD sports teams. Bicycles are predominantly recreational cyclists, youth and families. This trend in users for shared use paths holds true regionally – for Little Miami Scenic Trail, Wasson Way, etc. It is expected that “road cyclists” will continue to prefer roadways. The path is best characterized as a “shared use” path.

WHY THROUGH THE UTILITY CORRIDOR?

The Village commissioned an independent, third-party study by experienced engineers to recommend a preferred route through Mariemont. Village Council and its Engineer tasked the consultants to consider every and any possible alignment. The former transportation corridor (now utility corridor) was the clear choice among survey respondents.

WHO PAID FOR THE CORRIDOR STUDY?

The Corridor Study cost \$50,000. Half came from Mariemont private donors. Half came from [Tri State Trails](#), a not-for-profit organization funded by donations (including from Mariemont). TST promotes the benefits of trails, as welcoming public spaces to get outside and be active. For more information: <https://tristatetrails.org/our-work/>

WHY DIDN’T I KNOW ABOUT THIS?

The Corridor study and associated surveys and public meetings were announced in multiple Town Crier articles, via flyers distributed to every household, on the Village website, via the Village email list, and in Council meetings.

WAS THE “DO NOTHING” ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED?

Yes. That was the first option considered in the study.

WHY NOT SHARE AN EXISTING ROAD?

A path fully separated from auto traffic is essential for safety. As described previously, that path is primarily a walking trail.

WHAT WAS THE PRIORITY?

The Village asked two qualified engineering firms to focus on safety as the highest priority. To that end, the path is safely off roadways. In this upcoming phase (Miami to Pocahontas), intersections and crossings will be improved at both ends.

At the proposed path crossing of Miami Road, various safety countermeasures are proposed to allow for an improved intersection that will allow for an enhanced pedestrian crossing. Design criteria are employed to ensure a safe crossing. Recommended countermeasures include: adding a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) to the Miami Road pedestrian crossing; reducing access points to better align with access management standards; narrowing the lanes along Miami Road to calm traffic; and reducing the existing skews of the intersecting roadways to meet Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Standards and decrease speeds of turning vehicles. The engineering team rolled out first-level concepts for the Miami Road intersection at an Open House on November 16. The Village is seeking comments. Please send your ideas and suggestions to info@mariemont.org.

WHAT ABOUT GREENSPACE?

Several options were considered for the path alignment in this segment. Resident comments were carefully considered. Care was taken to ensure that large play areas in the space are maintained. The path was narrowed to the minimum 11-foot ODOT standard. Impacts to the tree canopy were minimized. The Project maintains 87% of the greenspace in the corridor. Based on experience here in Mariemont, regionally and nationally, the recreation, exercise and alternative transportation benefits from the shared use path will provide a significant benefit to Mariemont as well as our larger community. The trail is expected to connect more residents to our greenspace.

The trail can be a starting point for other projects to enhance the greenspace. For example, on the Murray Path project, a landscaping plan was developed in a series of iterations based on public input. Other suggestions for this next segment have included enhancements such as a play set (possibly with a trolley theme) in an enlarged space in General Short Park.

WHEN WILL THE PATH BE CONSTRUCTED FROM MIAMI TO PLAINVILLE?

The Village is pursuing grant opportunities for the proposed intersection improvements at Miami; the path from Miami to Plainville; and improvements to the Plainville intersection. Design and construction schedules will be developed when funding becomes available.

Please review the proposed Miami Road intersection improvements posted on the Village website and submit comments to info@mariemont.org.