

To: Lawrence City Commission  
From: Melinda Henderson, Brook Creek resident  
Re: May 8, 2018 Study Session Agenda Item #1: CIP

FYI per discussion at last week's meeting regarding the impact of connecting O'Connell Road to 19<sup>th</sup> Street.



**A project to extend 19th Street, essentially connecting it to Kansas' Highway 10, could provide better access to the University for students commuting from the Kansas City area.**

City Engineer David Cronin said the project was initially developed with the intent to provide better access to Venture Park and East Hills Business Park in Lawrence.

The planned \$3.6 million project would connect 19th Street to O'Connell Road, according to Cronin.

"The city staff recommendation is to reconstruct 19th Street from Harper to O'Connell with one eastbound lane, one westbound lane, and a center turn lane," Cronin said.

In addition to connecting 19th Street to O'Connell Road, the city is looking to rebuild a half-mile segment of East 19th Street from Harper Street to O'Connell Road, according to the Transportation Committee minutes from the March 29 meeting.

Along that segment, Cronin said the city is planning to add in bicycle lanes and sidewalks on the north and south sides of the street. He also said the waterline within the half-mile segment will be reconstructed, which has seen nine waterline breaks since 2011. There were four breaks in 2017 alone, according to the committee minutes.

During the construction, Cronin said neighbors living in this area will face inconveniences from traffic delays and detours.

**At the completion of the project, however, University students who use K-10 to commute from Lawrence to the Kansas City area said they would be using the newly connected road.**

**Tim Nolte, a University medical student who lives in Lawrence and commutes to Kansas City four days a week, said a straight shot to the University would be nice to have.**

**“It would benefit many people that live in KC and travel for classes. Access would be much easier for students in that way,” Nolte said.**

**Other commuters like Connor Stevenson, a freshman who commutes to Overland Park via Kansas Highway 10 about once a week, said he thinks access to a road that leads directly to the University would make it easier for University students, especially because Lawrence’s one-way roads can be a pain to maneuver.**

“I feel like that can and will benefit a lot of people who are always commuting,” Stevenson said. “It can be pretty annoying to have to constantly be stopping at lights and signs when you're just trying to get back to class, not to mention Lawrence is full of one-way streets, which typically make your drives a little longer.”

Although students are ready to see a street that they think will give them better access to the University, Cronin said the decision to extend 19th Street did not have anything to do with the University’s student population.

“The project should not affect student and teacher commutes,” Cronin said.

Currently much of 19th Street is not constructed to city street standards, specifically because there are no curbs or gutters, the pavement is in bad condition and sidewalks are inconsistent, according to the commission minutes.

The recommendation also emphasizes the need for the road connection because it will improve emergency access for individuals living and working in the area.

The construction on the road is planned to begin in the summer of 2019, Cronin said.

— Edited by Britt Redmond

[http://www.kansan.com/news/new-th-street-project-could-provide-better-access-to-ku/article\\_0954b2e2-3601-11e8-90d5-478545190841.html](http://www.kansan.com/news/new-th-street-project-could-provide-better-access-to-ku/article_0954b2e2-3601-11e8-90d5-478545190841.html)