

Castor Avenue Project Update

May 2025



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project seeks to improve Castor Avenue between Oxford Circle and Cottman Avenue.

The project will:

- Beautify the street
- Support neighborhood businesses
- Make it safer for pedestrians to cross the street
- Make public transit faster and more reliable
- Improve safety for everyone who uses Castor Avenue

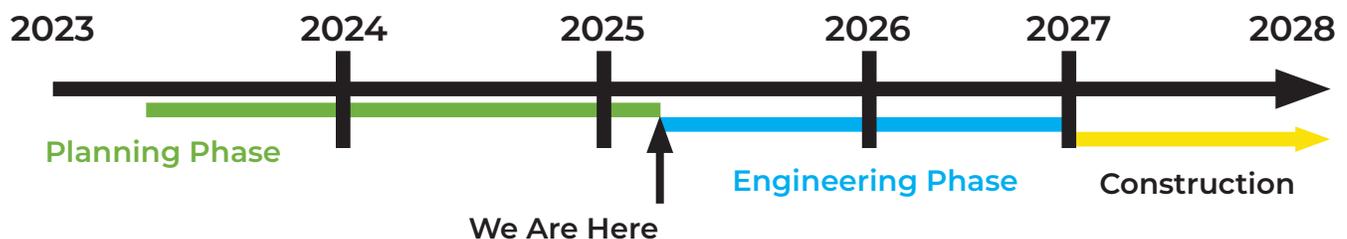
There were **197 crashes on Castor Avenue** between 2018 and 2022.

In these crashes:

5
people died

15
people were
seriously
injured

Project Timeline



Next Steps

With the planning phase complete, the project will move into final design and engineering. During this phase, funding will be fully secured before advancing to construction.

Engagement Results & Final Design

In October of 2024, PennDOT, the City of Philadelphia, and elected officials engaged community members with meetings, a survey, and door-to-door canvassing to review proposed changes to Castor Avenue.

This final design has been developed based on community feedback.

Between October and January, the project team had hundreds of conversations with community members and received **571 survey responses in 5 different languages.**

Respondents were asked to rate the different elements of the proposed design 1-5 stars.

For the final design, we've highlighted the key design elements and the average rating from the community survey.

Community Feedback



New Street Trees will cool the sidewalk on hot days and beautify the street.



A 4-to-3 lane road diet will improve safety for everyone using the corridor without a significant impact on traffic flow. This will include dedicated left-turn lanes to improve safety and neighborhood access. **This will not include a concrete median based on previous community feedback.**



Pedestrian lighting will improve pedestrian comfort and increase visibility.



Curb and sidewalk repair will reduce the burden of sidewalk maintenance for property owners, improve pedestrian access to businesses, and beautify the corridor.



Renderings of Castor Avenue



Upgraded transit stops will speed up the Route 59 and make it more accessible. The bus will stop every-other-block to improve operations.



A raised bike lane will separate people on bikes from vehicles and pedestrians. The design also makes it easier to load vehicles. This was chosen as a more attractive design than a traditional street-level bike lane.



Speed bumps in the center median will reduce speeding and aggressive driving.



After the removal of the concrete median, some neighbors were concerned that vehicles would speed down the median. **To mitigate this, the project will install speed bumps only in the median (not in the left turn lanes).**

Questions & Answers

Traffic & Safety

Will the project create congestion? No - traffic analysis for the project shows that between Oxford Circle and Cottman, travel times are expected to increase by fewer than 6 seconds at the AM peak, or **less than 0.5 seconds per block**. At the PM peak, travel times are expected to increase by 32-38 seconds, **about 2.5-3 seconds per block**. For context, travel times are roughly 5-6 minutes at peak today. There will be no impact on traffic congestion outside of peak hours.

Will the project make Castor Avenue Safer? - Yes, projects like this have shown to improve safety on streets like Castor Avenue. Nationally, **road diets have shown crash reductions between 19 and 47%**. Additional safety improvement will be generated through new traffic signals, curb extensions at bus stops, and better lighting.

Can left-turn signals be added to the project? This may be possible at some intersections. As part of the final design and engineering of the project, intersections will be analyzed for dedicated left-turn signals.

Can left-turn signals be added without a road diet? No, dedicated left-turn signals cannot be added for both directions on Castor without the addition of a left-turn lane. Without the left-turn lane, the turn signal would not be effective and would put pedestrians at risk.

Will the project impact emergency vehicles? No, the project is not expected to impact emergency response. The removal of concrete medians from the project will allow emergency vehicles to use the center median during emergency response. Additionally, traffic signal preemption will be added to give emergency responders green lights during an active response.

Trees & Landscaping

How will trees and landscaping be maintained? Property owners will be contacted and allowed to opt-out of new street trees. Street trees will be selected off the approved street tree list, working in coordination with property owners. Additionally, the City will work with neighborhood partners to explore additional support for tree and landscaping maintenance before the project goes to construction. The City also prunes and removes hazardous trees.

Business Impacts

Do projects like this hurt small businesses? No, studies from around the country have found increased economic activity after projects like this one due to increased foot traffic.

Will construction disrupt business? Impacts on businesses will be minimized as much as possible. This work will occur in the public right-of-way. Similar projects constructed around the City have been done without closing the roadway and with limited sidewalk closures. Full impacts of construction will be developed during final design and coordinated with businesses.