



City of Oakwood

Government Administration

City Manager

April 20, 2023

Dear Oakwood Resident,

Late last year, the city commissioned a traffic signal study with the primary purpose of developing a long-range plan for major capital improvements to Oakwood's traffic signal system. Much of the system will reach the end of its useful life over the next 5-10 years.

In September 2022, the *Dayton Daily News* published the enclosed two newspaper articles reporting on the study and mentioned that it will include evaluation of traffic signal options, most notably a roundabout at the intersection of Far Hills Avenue, Oakwood Avenue and Thruston Boulevard, often referred to as 5-Points.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the study is ongoing and is now heavily focused on 5-Points. The 5-Points intersection is the most complex traffic intersection in Oakwood, and its design is central to the safe and efficient movement of traffic through our city. It also has heavy pedestrian traffic, which requires the safest possible intersection design. At this point in the study, we have found sufficient evidence to consider the construction of a roundabout. There is extensive support from traffic safety studies for building roundabouts, showing that they reduce accidents, particularly serious injury accidents, and improve efficiency of traffic movement. This is why we have seen roundabouts constructed in multiple locations around the Miami Valley, throughout Ohio and all around the country.

That all said, and most importantly, Oakwood city leaders are far from arriving at any conclusion on the best option for addressing traffic control at 5-Points. No decision will be made until a thorough analysis is completed that details the pros and cons of traditional signalization versus a roundabout, and until city leaders receive feedback from the citizens of Oakwood and the general public.

The next phase of the traffic signal study involves creation of videos that depict in detail how a roundabout design at 5-Points would operate. We anticipate that the videos will be done within the next month or so, after which the city will host three open house events to present the videos and other details on the study. These open house events will take place in June and July. In addition to the events, the city will mail to all Oakwood citizens detailed information about the 5-Points intersection options, which will include the ability to provide input and feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "N. Klopsch".

Norbert S. Klopsch
City Manager

cc: Oakwood City Council
Doug Spittler, PE, Engineering and Public Works Director
Chris Kuzma, PE, Staff Engineer

Expensive traffic signals plan 'critically important'



Oakwood plans to rebuild its traffic signal system, which includes 17 signalized intersections. The signals have not been upgraded in more than 25 years. JIM NOELKER / STAFF

City hopes to 'leverage federal and state grant dollars' to aid project.

By Nick Blizzard
Staff Writer

OAKWOOD—The city wants to create a long-term, multimillion-dollar plan to upgrade Oakwood's traffic signals, most of which are on Ohio 48, also known as Far Hills Avenue.

Ohio 48 includes 10 of Oakwood's 17 traffic signal intersections, most of which have not been assessed or upgraded in more than 25 years, according to City Manager Norbert Klopsch.

Oakwood Vice Mayor Steve Byington called the traffic lights "a critical component of the city's transportation infrastructure."

City documents say traffic signals must be upgraded from time to time "when various parts of the signal system infrastructure

approach the end of their useful life." Traffic signal replacement can be very expensive. A recent proposal to replace lights at one intersection in Kettering came in over \$340,000.

Oakwood has contracted with Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT) of Columbus to provide a plan that would include the estimated cost and the duration of the proposal, Klopsch said.

City records show the goal is to create a plan that "maximizes

the opportunity to leverage federal and state grant dollars to assist in what will be a multimillion-dollar endeavor."

Oakwood will pay CMT \$133,446 for the master plan, which is expected to be completed by Jan. 31, 2023, city records show.

Maintaining the traffic signal system on Ohio 48 "is not only important to Oakwood, it is very important to the region," Klopsch

Traffic signals continued on B6



Far Hills Avenue (Ohio 48) looking north from East Dorothy Lane in Oakwood. Ohio 48 includes 10 of Oakwood's 17 traffic signals. JIM NOELKER / STAFF

Traffic signals

continued from B1

said in an email. "It is critically important for the safety of motorists, pedestrians, cyclists ... that the traffic signal system is continuously maintained and is functioning properly," he added.

Ohio 48 in Oakwood averages about 15,000 vehicles a day, most of which are passing through the city, Klopsch said.

The average number of vehicles using the road daily ranges from about 14,700 at Stewart Street in Dayton to more than 41,500 at Interstate 675 in Centerville, Ohio Department of Transportation records show.

Oakwood documents state CMT's work will include the following goals:

- Evaluate curb ramp

compliance with current ADA guidelines, a typical requirement if federal funding is used for construction.

- Prepare a safety overview of the city to identify opportunities that may be eligible for ODOT safety funding.

- Develop a construction cost estimate of upgrades that meet city criteria related to coordination, detection, and accessible pedestrian facilities.

- Develop a plan to be used for capital planning by the city and for a funding strategy.

- Prepare a Community Multiscale Air Quality application due in October to pursue federal funding for traffic signal upgrades.

Contact this reporter at 937-610-7438 or email Nick.Blizzard@coxinc.com.

Roundabout among traffic options

Oakwood will examine traffic volumes, land requirements and other issues on Far Hills Avenue.

By Nick Blizzard
Staff Writer

OAKWOOD – The creation of a roundabout on Ohio 48 in Oakwood will be explored as part of a long-term plan to improve traffic signals in the city.

The roundabout alternative will

be examined for the six-spoke intersection of Oakwood Avenue and Thruston Boulevard, halfway up the Far Hills Avenue hill, just south of Dayton.

The roundabout option will be studied as part of a master plan Oakwood has commissioned on upgrading its 17 traffic signals,

10 of which are on Ohio 48/Far Hills Avenue.

“This study will hopefully conclude with a recommendation on whether we should seriously talk about something dramatically different,” such as a roundabout, Oakwood City Manager Norbert Klopsch said. “At this point, I have no idea if that’s even feasible or practical.”

Roundabout continued on B8



The six-spoke intersection of Oakwood Avenue, Thruston Boulevard and Far Hills Avenue could change as part of a plan to upgrade signals. JIM NOELKER/STAFF

Roundabout

continued from B1

Ohio 48 is one of the most-traveled roads in the Montgomery County suburbs south of Dayton. The average daily number of vehicles using it ranges from about 14,700 at Stewart Street in Dayton to more than 41,500 at I-675 in Centerville, Ohio Department of Transportation records show.

Roundabout projects either planned, under construction or completed on state routes in Ohio include one in Allen County and four in Butler County, according to documents.

The estimated cost for such a project on Ohio 309 near Lima is \$4.6 million, according to ODOT.

The goal of Oakwood’s study by Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT) of Columbus is to create a plan that “maximizes the opportunity to leverage federal and state grant dollars to assist in what will be a multimillion-dollar endeavor,” city records state.

Whether or not Oakwood ultimately opts for a roundabout, rebuilding its traffic signals is expected to be costly. A recent proposal to replace lights at one intersection in Kettering came in at more than \$340,000.

Oakwood will pay CMT \$133,446 for the plan, which is expected to be completed by Jan. 31, 2023, city records show. CMG should provide a document that would include the estimated cost and the duration of the proposal for all traffic-signalized intersections, which Klopsch suggested could be five to 15 years.

In Oakwood’s case, “a roundabout has operational and safety benefits that may not be possible with a signalized, six-leg intersection,” CMT’s proposal states.

“The conceptual improvement plan will identify potential right-of-way impacts that will be factored into the total cost of the project.”

Roundabouts “are growing in popularity as more and more transportation agencies recognize the increased safety and traffic-moving efficiency they bring to intersections,” ODOT’s website states.

Klopsch said “the critical part of it is that you have ... land to build a roundabout. And also that traffic volumes in the various directions and the pedestrian traffic is such that a roundabout would, in fact, offer the level of service desirable.”

Aside from the land, other considerations include:

- The traffic signal at that intersection is the “controlling one in the cycle length” of Far Hills stop lights in Oakwood, Klopsch said. With six directional approaches, that length is comparatively longer than standard four-way lights.

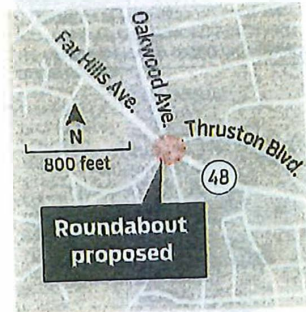
“Typically, the longer the cycle length, the longer people have to wait on the cross street ... to get a green light,” he added.

- The downhill/uphill approach to the intersection. Ohio 48’s path in Oakwood is about two miles, with a one-mile stretch nearest Dayton involving curves and inclines, “where, naturally, the higher speeds are realized,” Klopsch said.

Contact this reporter at 937-610-7438 or email Nick.Blizzard@coxinc.com.

Roundabout proposal

A roundabout on Ohio 48 (Far Hills Ave.) in Oakwood will be explored as part of a plan to improve traffic signals in the city.



A roundabout is being examined for the six-spoke intersection involving Oakwood Ave., Thruston Blvd. and Far Hills Ave. The intersection is just south of Dayton on Ohio 48 as you climb the hill to Oakwood. JIM NOELKER/STAFF