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City approves \$3 million in road projects

By Eric Robinette

Staff Writer

FAIRFIELD — City council Monday night approved three road construction projects - collectively worth more than \$3 million - to improve safety at three major thoroughfares.

These include the widening of River Road, improvements on Seward Road, and the intersection of Ohio 4 and Holden Boulevard. A large portion of the construction costs is being paid through state grants.

The most immediate of the projects is the widening of River Road to add 2-foot shoulders on both sides, from River Valley Court to Nilles Road, said Dave Butsch, the city's public works director. The work would start in about two or three weeks and is expected to be completed by the end of October.

The road is being widened for safety reasons. Referring to a shoulder along that road, City Councilman Tim Meyers said, "There isn't one."

The total project cost is about \$1.6 million. A \$985,000 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission will pay for the bulk of it; the city will pay for the remainder, Meyers said. The road will not be closed to traffic, but may be restricted to one lane at times. Butsch said. As part of the same project, a section of Gray Road, from Lake Michigan Drive to Monastery Drive, will also be widened, he said.

The Seward Road project involves adding turn lanes and a shoulder from Port Union to Symmes roads. That project costs \$1.7 million. The Ohio Public Works Commission will pay for \$750,000 and Fairfield will pay the rest. That project will not take place until July of next year, Butsch said.

The Ohio 4 project, costing about \$2.5 million, will not take place until 2016. Council Monday approved a Local Public Agency Agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation, meaning that ODOT will fund the project, but Fairfield will administer it, Butsch said. ODOT is funding 90 percent of that project.

City Manager Art Pizzano said Monday this project, which will add turn lanes and widen the road, involves making much-needed improvements to an intersection that is "one of the most dangerous in the city."

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