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The Nappanee Street pedestrian bridge was built in 1971 from parts of the old downtown arch that was torn down in 1968. The bridge is scheduled to come down in next summer.

Pedestrian bridge coming down

Ironwork of span over
Nappanee Street
moved from
downtown in 1971

By CLAYTON SIDENBENDER
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ELKHART — The Nappanee Street pedestrian bridge is coming down next summer after multiple inspections by independent engineering firms, city officials said.

The bridge does not meet current structural standards or modern ADA accessibility requirements. It also cannot be repaired or refurbished in a way that would bring it into compliance, officials said.

The ironwork for the bridge came from a decorative downtown archway at Main and Franklin streets that was moved in 1971.

The cost of building a new bridge is estimated to be \$8.5 million, City Communications Director Alex Otto said on Tuesday night at a Strong Avenue Neighborhood Association meeting.

“The bridge, even if it



The downtown arch from above, looking west down Franklin Street, in September 1967.

could be repaired, would not meet modern architectural standards and wouldn’t meet modern ADA requirements,” Otto said. “You can have a bridge that’s grandfathered in, but you can’t have bridge that’s grandfathered in and then fixed to stay that way indefinitely. That’s how our community gets better is

we have that unfunded federal mandate that as we do infrastructure and as things sort of expire in their life cycle that we build them better.”

The city has worked closely with Elkhart Community Schools, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Michiana Area

Council of Governments (MACOG) and elected officials both at the state and federal level to explore opportunities for partnership to construct a new pedestrian crossing, Otto said.

A replacement plan has not yet been finalized while

City Council approves relocation of transmission lines

By CLAYTON SIDENBENDER
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ELKHART — The Hively Avenue overpass has been years in the making, with several buildings cleared from the site and utility work completed, and progress continues, with city council approving \$1.4 million for the project.

The 7-1 vote on Monday provided for the relocation of transmission lines from American Electric Power (AEP). The city has already relocated a number of utilities for the project, including AEP, NIPSCO, fiberoptic companies and Frontier, Assistant City Engineer Jeff Schaffer said.

According to City Communications Director Alex Otto, the utility work for the project was scheduled to be completed in March with major work scheduled to begin by March 2026. The Hively Avenue Overpass is scheduled to be completed in the last quarter of 2027, he said.

“The utilities that are within our right of way are required to relocate at their expense,” Schaffer said. “So, all the utilities to date have been relocated at their expense. This utility is unique because American Electric Power, or AEP, owns the property that this utility sits on, so that makes it our expense as the sponsor of the project.”

Schaffer said the relocation will not impact anyone’s service because the lines are transmission lines, not distribution lines. The timeline of the relocation is lengthy but goes along with the timeline of the entire project, he said.

City Councilman Aaron Mishler said INDOT is put-

ting in another \$400,000 into the project, in addition to the \$1.4 million the city is contributing.

“I would just like to say that I do believe that creating the overpass will definitely support additional residential and commercial growth in the area,” Mishler said. “I know one of the reasons why the overpass is so desired is, one, it could help eventually create a no-horn zone for trains to go through, which is greatly desired by both residents and commercial businesses in the area, and it will also greatly reduce transit times for both school buses who oftentimes get stuck at the tracks, increasing the desirability of residential development, as well as reduction of emergency services, such as police, ambulances and fire, that often can get stuck at those tracks or have to reroute, so I do believe this will greatly contribute to both residential and commercial growth in our community.”

City Councilman Brent Curry also gave his support to the project noting that it will benefit his 5th District.

Megan Erwin, chief of staff for Mayor Rod Roberson, said the city has been putting aside funding specifically for the match portion of the Hively Avenue overpass project.

“We’ve spoken about this a couple times in relation to SEA 1,” Erwin said in reference to the tax reform measure approved by the Indiana General Assembly and signed into law earlier this year. “The city’s been putting aside funding specifically for the match portion, the city’s portion, of the overpass

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This is the intersection of South Main Street and Hively Avenue where construction of a railroad overpass is planned.

Transfer center being relocated

TRUTH STAFF

ELKHART — The Interurban Trolley’s Elkhart Transfer Center will be permanently relocated Monday to 2nd Street across from the Elkhart Amtrak Station.

Buses will stop on the east side of Second Street between Tyler and Harrison streets, exiting northbound on Second.

The City of Elkhart is installing temporary bus shelters located on the west side of the street, and passengers waiting there must cross the street to board buses. These temporary shelters will be replaced by the city in the coming months with

permanent canopy structures on the east side of the street.

The relocation of the transfer center will improve service and set up new multimodal connection opportunities for riders, the Michiana Area Council of Governments said in announcing the change.

The existing transfer center, about three blocks north on West Franklin Street, is adjacent to the former Elkhart County Superior Court at 315 S. 2nd St., a building scheduled to be demolished following completion of the new county courthouse in Dunlap.

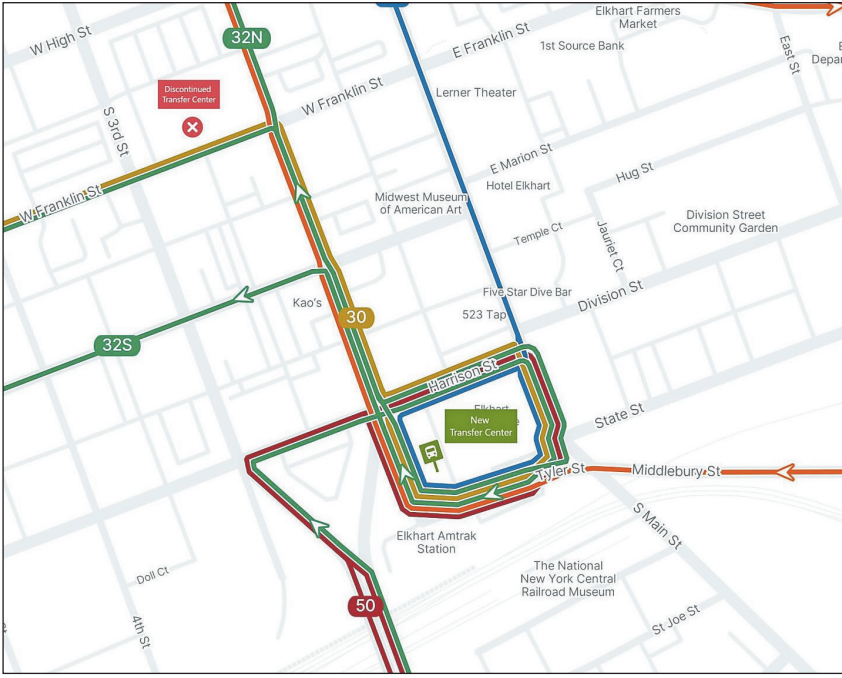
The Interurban Trolley provides public transit services in

This map shows the existing transfer station in red and the new site in green.

MACOG

Elkhart and Goshen. Since 1999, the Michiana Area Council of Governments has administered what has become a five-route system, plus a complementary paratransit service called Interurban Trolley Access. The Trolley is operated by a service provider, running on weekdays from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

More information is available from Michiana Area Council of Governments at 574-674-8894 or www.interurbantrolley.com.



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