



# MEDINA, WASHINGTON

## AGENDA BILL

February 10, 2025

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**Subject:** City Right of Way Planning

**Category:** City Business

**Staff Contacts:** Mayor Jessica Rossman, Ryan Osada, Public Works Director, Stephen R. Burns, City Manager, and Jennifer Robertson, City Attorney

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### **Summary**

The purpose of this discussion is provide Council with a proposed process for undertaking the requested right of way planning work to tackle the issue Council identified at the January 13, 2025 Council meeting. Council should share whether the proposed process (Section A) meets their goals in undertaking this work, and should review the right of way topics listed in Section B include all areas of interest. If approved, this work as proposed is expected to take 18 to 24 months.

### **A. Process Proposed for Right of Way Planning Update:**

1. **Orientation – Grounding the Policy Makers in “what is”** (this may take multiple meetings)
  - a. Developed Right of Way in Medina
  - b. Undeveloped Right of Way in Medina
  - c. Current use of developed right of way
  - d. Themes on usage for various corridors
  - e. Streets operations and who maintains improvements
  - f. Existing Code and how it is implemented
2. **Hire right of way Landscape Consultant**
  - a. Set Scope of Work and Budget
3. **Establish process for visioning work with Consultant and Council**
  - a. Public involvement
  - b. Formation of Committee?
4. **Visioning Work** (note: this is where the Right of Way Topics in Section B below will be addressed by the Council). This work will include:
  - a. Look, feel, and functions desired for various corridors
  - b. Classification of various corridors
  - c. Creation of themes for various corridors
  - d. City entry visioning
  - e. Other topics below (Section B)
5. **Creation of Standards consistent with Vision** (this will involve heavy staff work)
  - a. Includes adoption of code changes

6. **Creation of any other related public works standards for rights of way** (this will involve heavy staff work)
  - a. Includes adoption of resolution adopting public works standards
7. **Creation of Budget policy and/or city code updates** to address responsibilities for maintenance of City improvements in ROW

**B. Right of Way Topics to be included in Visioning Work:**

- 1) **Community Design Issues.**
  - a) Possibility of addressing in the context of an update to the Community Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan
  - b) What should streets in Medina look like?
    - i) What “look and feel” will preserve unique neighborhood character but also allow functionality with increased density?
    - ii) Lighting
    - iii) Signage
    - iv) Safety

*\*Note Council vote on 7/10/2023 that the walking path on the west end of Overlake Dr E “be completed and maintained as is with crushed rock and for city staff to not resubmit the grant application for the paving part....” [6-0, one councilmember absent.]*
  - c) Need for community input/involvement in vision
- 2) **Parking.**
  - a) What is the City’s on-street parking rules? Do most people know them? Are they consistent? Are they fair across different neighborhoods and different street conditions?
  - b) Do we need to manage ROWs differently to have more parking?
    - i) Do we have adequate parking for home-hosted events?
    - ii) Will we need more street parking with increased density from middle housing?
    - iii) Should there be shoulder development requirements like Hunts Point and Yarrow Point to preserve parking?
  - c) Should adjoining landowners be entitled to pave or otherwise permanently construct on City ROW land to create parking spots?
    - i) Is this consistent with low impact development practices encouraged or required by Department Ecology, etc.? What are the implications for stormwater infrastructure and unfiltered runoff to Lake Washington?
    - ii) If parking space construction is allowed, should the look be standardized? (e.g., to make clear that it is public land/parking, to make easier to repair if City disturbs, etc.)
  - d) Should the City allow placement of boulders, rocks, etc. in ROW land? Currently MMC does not allow
- 3) **Infrastructure Planning.** Does the City anticipate needing anything more or different (e.g., sidewalks, tools for managing increased bicycle traffic, etc.)?

- 4) **Maintenance.** Who is responsible for maintaining ROW land not in use as streets or sidewalks? What public safety regulation is necessary, if any?
  - a) Who pays for restoration when City or utility disturbs private landscaping on publicly owned ROW?
    - i) Is this a blanket rule, or are there factors to be considered in deciding whether to reimburse an adjoining property owner?
  - b) Who is responsible for installing landscaping on ROW land if adjoining landowner does not want to do it?
    - i) Examples from 12th Street: outside golf course's new fence, and newly constructed planting beds next to sidewalk.
      - (1) Are those examples the same answer, or different answers?
  - c) Who is responsible for keeping hedges trimmed off sidewalks?
    - i) Can/should city request & collect reimbursement for costs of trimming private landscaping away from pedestrian paths and/or traffic? [Council direction and ongoing discussion, circa 2019 levy vote onward]
  - d) What happens if city ROW land is not maintained by an adjoining landowner and becomes unattractive?
  
- 5) **Safety.** Should there be safety rules about what can be planted or put in the area between a sidewalk and a street? (e.g., for visibility between street and sidewalk, to minimize likelihood of growth out over sidewalk or into street, etc.)
  - 6) **Communication/Outreach.** What communication with residents is needed?
    - a) How will residents understand what land the City owns (or has an easement on), so that they are aware of any risk that landscaping they install there may be disturbed in the future?
    - b) What kind of communication with residents is needed before adjoining ROW land is disturbed for City or utility projects?
  
- 8) **Miscellaneous.** Additional Topics Raised at 1/13 Council Meeting
  - a) Managing right of way encroachments
    - i) Permit procedures
    - ii) Sight line maintenance
  - b) Utilities Issues in ROW
    - i) Installation of conduit when the street is open
    - ii) Utility undergrounding
  - c) Neighborhood Identity/Branding
  - d) Consistency of Vision with Walkable Medina and Comp Plan
  - e) Parking for Special Events
  - f) Trash/Litter Management
  - g) Stormwater Impacts
    - i) Low Impact Storm Water Practices – including for new infrastructure
  - h) Consideration of Undertaking a Parking Study
    - i) Traffic Calming
    - ii) Slowing traffic (bulb outs and other methods)
    - iii) Safety issues (pedestrians)

“City Right of Way Planning” meets and supports Council’s priorities 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Council Priorities:

1. Financial Stability and Accountability
2. **Quality Infrastructure**
3. **Efficient and Effective Government**
4. Public Safety and Health
5. **Neighborhood Character and Community Building**

**Attachments:**

**Budget/Fiscal Impact:** N/A

**Recommendation:** Discussion and direction.

**City Manager Approval:** 

**Proposed Council Motion:** N/A

Time Estimate: 30 minutes