



# PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 3  
March 2, 2023  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvement Project 30% Design	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Ask questions of panelists; discuss design options presented; consider motion(s) as proposed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

<b>STAFF:</b>	Paul West, Senior CIP Project Manager	
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Craig Reynolds	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>72<sup>nd</sup> Ave Overpass Intersection Options diagrams</li> <li>72<sup>nd</sup> Ave Overpass Intersection Options comparison</li> </ol>	

## SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

The [Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan](#) (2019, page 43, bullet D. Convergence Area) identified the trail intersection under the 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave SE Overpass as a “potential location for a trail roundabout to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.” As part of the Aubrey Davis Trail Safety Improvements project, City staff and the design team have sought to implement this master plan element. An initial roundabout concept was presented as part of the draft 30% design to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) at the [June 2, 2022](#) meeting. The design team revised the 30% design, including the roundabout element, for [July 7, 2022](#) and [September 1, 2022](#) meetings based on input from the public and the PRC. At the September meeting, the PRC resolved questions about all elements of the 30% design except for the roundabout element. The direction for this intersection remains the only outstanding issue in the PRC’s 30% design recommendation.

In the fall of 2022, WSDOT reviewed the 30% design. WSDOT staff provided extensive input on the roundabout feature. To address these comments, the design team developed two options for the roundabout. At its [January 5, 2023](#) meeting, the PRC reviewed the two roundabout options. Option 1, the larger roundabout with a 14’ travelway and a prominent 16’ diameter center island, was preferred by WSDOT and presented as the staff recommendation. Option 2, the smaller roundabout, had a 12’ travelway and an at-grade 10’ diameter concrete center. The PRC asked several questions about the proposal for Option 1 and shared concerns regarding the size. Questions included:

- What is the evidence that contributes to WSDOT’s preference for Option 1?
- Is there a way to reduce the size of Option 1?
- Is Option 2 an acceptable option to WSDOT?
- Are there other options that can be considered?

The PRC decided to delay forwarding a recommendation to City Council until it could further evaluate alternatives for the roundabout feature.

## **WSDOT AND DESIGN TEAM PARTICIPATION**

As requested by several commissioners, City staff has arranged for staff from WSDOT and the design team to be present at Thursday's meeting to answer questions. Once they have answered questions, WSDOT staff will have the option of leaving the meeting. The design team will remain to be available to assist with evaluating design alternatives.

## **THREE UPDATED DESIGN OPTIONS**

To support the PRC's direction, staff asked the design team to develop three options, including two non-roundabout options. These three options are presented in Exhibit 1. All three options will improve trail safety in comparison to the existing condition. City staff, the design team, and WSDOT staff have discussed these three options. Staff prepared a comparison matrix of the three options presented as Exhibit 2.

**Option 1: Roundabout** This option remains mostly the same as the preferred option presented in January. The center island height has been slightly reduced. This option remains the WSDOT preferred design.

**Option 2.1: New "mixing zone" option** This design is an update of the Option 2 presented in January. It removes the roundabout circulation pattern. Option 2.1 addresses concerns about the ability to function as a roundabout by reconfiguring it as a "mixing zone", similar to the mixing zones proposed for the restroom area. It provides more room for trail users to maneuver around each other.

**Option 3: Retain existing trail width through the intersection** The existing intersection remains substantially as-is. This option reduces the width of the spur path to the parking lot; it expands gravel shoulders to provide sight clearance and refuge for pedestrians, and it adds traffic control improvements to the existing condition.

Signage has been updated in all options to reflect WSDOT's recommendation to rely more on pavement markings and less on signs for traffic control. Signage details will be further developed in the 60% design phase.

## **RECOMMENDED OPTION:**

The 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave Overpass Intersection is a place where many trail users converge with differing goals, travel speeds, and behaviors. Trail users include bike commuters, recreational cyclists, recreational walkers, dog walkers, athletic teams, picnic shelter rental groups, kids and parents headed to the playground, and riders of new and emerging electric-powered devices, such as E-bikes and scooters. The volume of trail users is expected to continue to grow in coming decades.

There are three strategies to improve this intersection to reduce conflict among these users:

1. Provide adequate sight distance so trail users can anticipate the intersection.
2. Provide striping, pavement markings, and signs to alert users and alter their behavior.
3. Provide adequate maneuvering space for users to pass each other with reasonable separation.

All three options incorporate the first two strategies. However only Options 1 and 2.1 provide adequate maneuvering space for users. The 12' trail width in Option 3 limits how trail users crossing paths can maneuver around each other. The greater trail width of Options 1 and 2.1 provides each trail user more choices and more time to signal their intentions.

Additionally, Option 1 will achieve speed reduction by deflecting faster moving trail users around the center island. The defined circulation pattern will promote predictable behavior by all users and encourage users to

move through the intersection. Option 2.1 provides sufficient space but does not direct trail users as well. Also, Option 2.1 as a mixing zone would need to be designed so that it is not mistaken as a place to gather or rest. It will need to be different than the mixing zone by the restrooms. Aesthetic impacts of Option 1 are likely to be greater and could be a basis for choosing Option 2.1.

Option 1 is recommended to be incorporated into the 30% design. Selecting this option provides the greatest safety for current and future trail users. The difference in costs between Options 1 and 2.1 are insignificant. Aesthetic impacts of Option 1 can be mitigated to some degree in the subsequent design of the center island and the surrounding landscaping.

The budget impact of Option 1 can be addressed in several ways. The project can be split into phases and the roundabout construction postponed until funding can be secured. City staff have identified two grant programs that could fund the budget shortfall of approximately \$170,000 to complete this project. It is also possible that additional state funding could be obtained in future budget cycles. City Council may also consider this work a priority and appropriate additional capital funding to complete the project if it is available.

If the PRC selects an option, that will complete its 30% design recommendation. The design will be ready to transmit to City Council. The PRC could also ask the design team to modify one of these options if there is consensus to do so. However, if the modifications are minor, it would be more efficient to record them and defer such changes to the next design stage.

It is important to note that if the PRC selects Option 2 or 3, it will be taking a direction different from that suggested in the Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan, as mentioned in the **Background** section of this report. Staff believe that this may be justified given the effort expended to implement a roundabout solution at this location. Staff would document the decision in its agenda bill to City Council when the 30% design is transmitted. The PRC may also wish to discuss this effort in a transmittal memo if one of those options is selected.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

If the PRC selects an option for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave Overpass Intersection, staff recommends that the PRC's transmittal memo be referred to a subcommittee for finalization. Once the memo is approved by the PRC, City staff will work with the chair to transmit the memo to the City Council. Staff then will work with the Design Team to develop the 60% design and, if directed by the City Council, return to the PRC in Q2 2023 for 60% design review. The project was originally scheduled to construct in spring 2023; however, construction is now expected to begin in fall 2023 or later.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. Discuss design alternatives with WSDOT engineers and the design team.
2. Motion to include Option 1 in the 30% design.
3. If the PRC completes 30% design, direct staff to finalize the 30% design for presentation to the City Council. Authorize a subcommittee to finalize the recommendation memo and return it to the chair for PRC approval at the April 2023 meeting.