

## Memorandum

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TO: MAYOR FREEMAN & MILLWOOD CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: MATT GILLIS, P.E.  
PRJ. #: 51061  
SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ARGONNE RD PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORT  
DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2024

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### Summary of Argonne Road Public Outreach Effort

During our public outreach efforts for the Argonne Road project, we received substantial feedback from the community. Below is a summary of the primary concerns and considerations raised by the public, along with our proposed strategies for addressing them:

#### Concerns Raised by the Community w/ Welch Comer Responses

- **Concern:** Tearing up the street: The community expressed concerns about the disruption and inconvenience from extensive street construction.
- **Response:** Many remember the intrusiveness of the 2009 project. However, this upcoming project will be much less intrusive and shorter in duration. Most of the work will be conducted on the east side. Left turns will be available, which were not in 2009.
- **Concern:** Road will be too wide: There is apprehension that the new road design may be too wide, potentially affecting the local aesthetic and functionality.
- **Response:** The road is widening about 11 feet in total, just enough to provide a left turn lane for people trying to get into Millwood. These left turn lanes will improve safety and reduce congestion. Eventual implementation of turn lanes is consistent with the 2008 Argonne Corridor Study.
- **Concern:** Eliminating existing crosswalks: Residents are concerned that removing existing crosswalks will reduce pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- **Response:** The crosswalk of particular concern, located on the east side of the railroad crossing, was removed due to a railroad requirement related to their switch. After months of working and negotiating with the railroad, the City accepted the railroad's requirement.
- **Concern:** Pushing traffic into residential neighborhoods: The community fears that the new road design will divert traffic into nearby residential areas, causing congestion and safety issues.
- **Response:** This concern arises from the closure of the northbound left turn at Euclid due to serious safety concerns. It's common to see vehicles parked on the RR tracks when waiting behind a vehicle turning left at Euclid; this is undesirable. The 14 vehicles that turn at Euclid during the peak hour (about 1 vehicle every 4 minutes) will be directed to other side streets (Grace, Frederick, Dalton, Liberty, S. Riverway).
- **Concern:** Congestion relief: There is skepticism about the project's ability to reduce traffic volumes effectively, with concerns that the road will remain congested.

- **Response:** Argonne Road will remain busy. Even with the Bigelow Gulch improvements, SRTC traffic modeling shows that Argonne traffic will only decrease from 31,477 vehicles/day in 2019 to 27,438 in 2045. Also, Millwood's Argonne project itself will not likely reduce traffic volumes. Instead, providing left turns will help with congestion and improve safety.

## Design Modifications

We are carefully considering public design change requests to ensure they align with the current City Council direction for the project. The primary concerns provided and their potential mitigation are provided below:

- **Concrete Median North of Liberty:** We will slightly modify and shorten this median to improve access to the Old Mill Grill on the west side of Argonne. This minor change can be accommodated.
- **Planter strip/concrete barrier:** We will add a barrier or planter between the curb and pathway on the east side, north of Liberty, by narrowing the lanes further but still within standards. The inclusion of a physical barrier (concrete) will depend on the project's budget and may be added as an alternate.
- **Widening Sidewalk on the east side south of the Millwood Trail:** We will reduce lane widths in this area to widen the sidewalk up to 8+ feet, providing a safer pedestrian design.
- **Transit Stop Modifications:** To reduce bus stop duration and help with congestion, we will modify and raise the curb/sidewalk at the northbound transit stop, facilitating ADA loading ramp operations.
- **Frederick Island Modification:** We will slightly modify the proposed concrete island just south of Frederick to allow better westbound left turns, especially for fire trucks.

## Potential Future Improvements

The following items are worth further consideration but are not part of this project. The City will explore how and when they will be reviewed, designed, and implemented into the community.

- **Wayfinding:** The City will explore potential designs, locations, content for a Wayfinding system in the downtown area. Recommend creating a committee to explore options.
- **Street Furniture:** Like wayfinding, street furniture will be studied after the project is complete. Recommend a committee to discuss and select style and location of all furniture (benches, garbage cans, bike racks).
- **Empire Bike Path:** Once the project is complete, the City will evaluate how the Empire bike path system integrates into Argonne Road.
- **SVFD Access to Argonne:** We will provide the necessary infrastructure for future installation of any fire truck warning system.