

November 22, 2023

TO: Mayor McFarland and Public Safety & Welfare Committee

FROM: Dana Davis, Chair

RE: Closing of South Water Street

Mayor McFarland and Public Safety & Welfare Committee,

On August 2, 2023, the City Staff asked the Public Safety and Welfare (PSW) Committee to consider the degree to which they had an “appetite” for closing a portion of S. Water St 1) permanently, 2) seasonally or 3) for extended periods of time. The transcript from that discussion is attached with this memo.

After a lengthy discussion, the PSW committee indicated that they supported the continued closings of S. Water St. for Town Square special events (i.e. concerts). However, the PSW committee did not support the closing of S. Water St. 1) permanently, 2) seasonally or 3) for extended periods of time. The discussion then turned to the possibility of installing swing arms to make closing the street for frequent special events easier for city staff. Please see attached transcript for details.

On November 13, a portion of S. Water St. by Bentzin Town Square was closed to traffic. Concrete barriers were put in place. The Santa House and large community Christmas tree were placed in the road. The City announced that the road would be closed from November 13 – January 3, 2024. The PSW committee members learned of the closing by observing the concrete barriers, reading social media posts and word-of-mouth.

After inquiring about the closing, I was provided the following information:

- The staff followed the Special Event permitting process to gain approval to close the road.
 - NOTE: Special Events are limited by ordinance to four days.
- The Mayor gave the Park and Rec Department approval to close the road if the closing was approved by the Police and Fire Department
- The Police and Fire Dept. approved the closing.
- The Engineering Dept. was involved in planning for the closing along with the Streets Dept.
- Attorney Chesebro has indicated that the state statute allows an authority in charge of street maintenance to close streets by order, ordinance, or resolution. According to Attorney Chesebro, the road was not closed illegally.

Numerous city residents and the PSW committee members expressed significant concern about the method and length of the S. Water St. closing. In response, Mayor McFarland has orchestrated an adjustment to the original street closing time frame. Mayor McFarland said that she would work with the city team to open S. Water St. the week following the December 2 Town Square vendor event, Jingle Bell on the Rock. The PSW committee appreciates this adjustment to the originally announced schedule.

Going forward, I ask the city to delineate the process whereby S. Water Street is closed for Town Square programming events.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

- Is there currently an ordinance in place to provide a basis for closing S. Water St. for Town Square programming events that extend beyond four days?
- Should there be an ordinance in place to provide for the closing of S. Water St. for Town Square programming events that extend beyond four days?
 - Support for an ordinance should include a cost-benefit analysis. The analysis should examine the community benefit vs. the costs (tangible and intangible) that will be carried by the city and residents.
- If there is support for an ordinance, who will the ordinance delegate the authority for closing S. Water St to (person? department? Committee?)
- In the event of an extended closing, how and when will residents be notified of the closing?
- In the event of an extended closing, how will police and fire ensure that response times are not impacted?

Thank you,

Dana Davis

Chair, Public Safety and Welfare Committee

DISCLAIMER: This transcript was generated using artificial intelligence.

John Kaliebe - 829 Richards Avenue. My first question is, was there ever a traffic count on the number of vehicles that use Southwater and South Washington Streets pre-Town Square? My guess would be there was and still is high volume of traffic both north and southbound on both streets. Regarding making improvements to South Water Street, paint a yellow line down the middle of the street to a determined distance from the intersection, dividing it in half so the north and southbound lanes are each 12.5 feet wide. Paint lines designating the crosswalk on Main Street on a town square side, as there are throughout the entire city. This is a safety feature. Paint a solid white stop line before the crosswalk in a northbound lane, like there are at other intersections around town. By doing this, you would alleviate northbound vehicles from taking too much of the street, making one turning south onto Water Street safer and easier.

If you close a 100 block of South Water Street, you move the traffic up to South Washington and Main Streets. That intersection is already congested now with regular through traffic and vehicles entering, exiting Walgreens parking lot and people using the library drop box lane and parking lot. And then you have to include the number of vehicles entering and exiting the Globe Apartments and the proposed 100 unit apartment complex. Then one has to contend with the timing of the stop and go lights at the intersection of Church and Main Streets, which is one of the busiest intersections in town, and at the intersection of Main Street, Main and Water Streets, both one city block away. Depending on the time of day, the day of the week, it is difficult to go north on Washington Street or to make a left-hand turn go westbound onto Main Street. It will also make turning left southbound onto South Washington Street more difficult. There are already vehicles driving around to stop westbound vehicles on Main Street on the right-hand side. Then there are pedestrians crossing at that intersection without a walk-don't-walk sign. Pedestrians have the right-of-way. Back to South Water Street, why aren't there signs in place specifying parking limitations? Before the town square there used to be either two-hour and or handicap parking signs in the 100 block of both sides of the street. Then there were no parking-anytime signs, permanent style, installed before the opening of the town square, on both sides of the street, only be taken down two days later. Now there are no signs at all except one, no parking anytime, which means what and where? There are, were ordinances created regarding this, why aren't there signs stating these parking limitations in a 100 block? If not posted, how is one to know the parking limitations? How can the ordinances be enforced? And hearing rumors that the present barricades are too cumbersome and heavy to move, why not purchase portable pop-up, portable bollards or pop-up barricades that are crash tested? You know, that intersection on Water and Main Street, my wife and I were sitting there, turning left onto Main Street, going eastbound in the evening, and there was, I'm going to say, a female driver going west on Main Street, had no clue that the light had changed, and it was red for a while, or it was us, red for a while, and she just kept on going. I seen it, so that's why we stopped. It's behavioral things, I mean, and it can be parenting. If there's an issue with kids running across the street, to me it's parenting and it's really your own responsibility.

Dana Davis - Thank you so much. We're actually going to discuss Water Street as one of our agenda item, so feel free to stick around as we further that discussion a little bit. Is there anybody else here who would like to speak, has a public comment about something that's not on our agenda tonight. Okay, with that I'd like to close the opportunity for public comment and then we'll go into item number three

which is approval of minutes. Our meeting minutes from July 5th have already been approved by the Common Council so we just include them here as just part of the record. No need to formally approve them in our committee since they've already been approved. So with that, let's move on to the business.

Our first item under business is to review and take possible action, closing a portion of South Water Street between West Main Street and Emmett Street. And so I actually think this item and the next item may kind of merge together a little bit, but I'll let you, Jaynellen, kind of give us a broad overview.

Jaynellen – {People have asked} us to close the portion of South Water Street, south of Main Street, to the south edge of Bentzin Family Town Square. And the question, or things to be discussed or explored this evening with the committee is, number one, is there an appetite for that? And if there is an appetite for that, with what frequency would it want to be closed? Would it be permanently closed? Would it only be during programming season for the town square? Would it be as it is right now, just when there's events there, it's closed off and then it's reopened? Things to explore and discuss this evening. I'm assuming that Chief Kaminsky may have some insight into, to what will work best for, for his department. I, I reached out to Travis. I don't think I got anything back from Travis, but I may also have an opinion on that. So, just for discussion.

Dana Davis - Okay, good. And then we have other people here probably want to discuss that, so I'll throw it out to you all, whoever wants to speak. You want to go first, Peg?

Peg Checkai - Sure, I'll go first. Peg Checkai from the Watertown Public Library. Dana kindly reached out to me earlier in the week, so it was nice to be included in the conversation here. Safety-wise, if I had to say safety-wise, should you close the street? Yes. I think kids, people in general, because there's not a curb, the light bulb does not go off that they're heading into the street. Sorry, Steph and Christine. But there have been garbage bins lined up along the whole side of the street all week long. Those could easily be pushed out into traffic. Kids could run out in between them. And it's that first time that has happened. So we see kids goofing around. Do I think it's going to be a young kid, a child who gets hit by a car? No. I think it's going to be an adult or it's going to be a teenager. Because they're goofing around, they're playing on the table over there, and they're not paying attention to what's going on.

On the flip side of that, we make it really hard for people to come to the library and we're starting to hear that from our library patrons. And I agree with so many things that Mr. Kaliebe said. The area is so congested. The corner of Main and Washington Street is sometimes backed up with people trying to get out, get in. And I know some of that will be alleviated once the construction is done. But there is not a stoplight there. There are no crossing walks there. There isn't anything there to guide people across the street. And the traffic will be shifted from South Water up to South Washington Street. Just getting around the area, once the apartment complex goes in, you're closing the street to Emmett Street, will the people in the apartment complex have access to that chunk of street right there? But then people who want to park in the area, either for the library or Bentzin Park, be not allowed to park in there. I

worry a lot just about the flow around the building, where traffic is going to go and the impact on library patrons just being able to get there. It's already, parking is already impacted and people are already chosen, we've heard not to come to the library because parking is so difficult.

Dana Davis - Is there anybody else who wants to comment?

Dan Bardt - Yeah. I'm Dan Bardt, Alderman for District 4. So I'm on a number of committees. One of the committees I'm on is the Town Square Programming Committee. I know we discussed this at our last meeting. I'm generally in favor of the closure of that part of the street. But there are two things I'm concerned about, and it's really more of a timing issue, I think, when we're going to close it. So in September of this year, we're supposed to be, T-Wall, we're supposed to be starting construction for Riverhouse on the Rock, and I know they've already requested to use part of Water Street for staging. So I don't know how easy it's gonna be for them to get in and out of there if that part of the street's closed. And then right after that, so that's gonna last about a year, construction there. And right after that, of course, we're gonna close Main Street Bridge. So detour routes, I don't know if those have been considered yet or not, but I think it would be useful probably to have Water Street open at that point for detour routes.

Dana Davis - So what would you say the programming months are if we were to shut for programming?

Kristine Butteris - year-round, really, we're going to have programming year-round. The main concern is in the summer, you know, from May to September, we've got the water fountain running basically non-stop. So that is a concern, right, because there is no curb. So it does feel, and I've caught myself too being out there talking to contractors and stuff and being in the middle of the road realizing it's open. Right now I need to get over to the side. So, you know, we do have that and then we also have our concerts and all of that. On the other side of that, in the winter, we have those things, the holiday tree is actually too heavy to stand it, to set it in the square. So we would actually have to set it in the roadway in order to have the tree down there. The other thing too is if we had a nice skating rink, which goes back to the whole paver thing, right? We can't set it on those pavers, so that also would have to go in the street, which then would mean that the street would be closed from, I would probably say, mid-November to probably February at the very earliest to be, you know, so that would be the shutdown time for that area.

Dana Davis - Do you have any, like, the traffic you looked up was more for Main Street, right?

Chief Kaminski -I looked at traffic crashes, so I'm pulling it up again because I never really looked at Washington Street at all, just to see where we were at for Washington Street.

I actually pointed out more even going down further at the corner of South Washington and Emmett. A lot of people blow right through that stop sign right there. I can't tell you how many times I've almost been hit. But we see actually quite a few accidents at the corner of South and Main.

So just all I did was look at the intersections right now of Water in Main and at Washington and Main and they both have in the intersection themselves roughly the same amount of crashes in the last five years. Roughly five. East Water Street though, let's just say the area between East Water Street and the river. I'm sorry, East Main Street and the river. Water to the river on Main. There's a lot of crashes there. I mean, they're kind of interspersed along that area, but if we're just talking crashes at the intersection, there's five. If I move over to Emmett Street, just to glance at it, we don't have, in the last five years, there are no crashes within that intersection of Water Street and Emmett and there are two in the last five years at Washington and Emmett.

Brad Blanke - On Main Street between water and the river, yes, how current are those crashes? Did they occur during the construction of Town Square due to distracted driving or are they spread out over the course of five years?

Chief Kaminski - So I'd have to click on each one so I'm doing that now as we were you're talking so I have to click on each one so I'm doing that now as we were you're talking so I have it won't take have to click on each one so I'm doing that now as we were you're talking so I have it won't take long. 2018 6 of 23 7 of 22 9 of 20 3 of 2023. By 3 I mean March. 10 of 2020. 10 of 2020. So it's been an ongoing problem. 8 of 2022. And now my last one is 2 of 2022. But it's drawn our attention more now.

Dana Davis - So that's interesting.

Steve Board - That's not just the construction of the park, that's also the demolition of the 100 block.

Chief Kaminski - Right.

Steve Board - So there was a lot of distraction going on.

Chief Kaminski - Yeah.

Dana Davis - So when I was first thinking about this, I thought, oh yeah, we should just close it. But I went over there Monday night to check it out. I don't have little kids, so they're not splashing in there. And it was Monday night, 515, and I was struck about the number of cars that were using the street.

And then thinking about the constructions that's happening now and thinking about the building, I was flummoxed, actually, to think about, how are they going to get to that area? And we're making it so hard to move around. So I think it's, for me now, it hasn't become so, yeah, let's just close it. I realize now the complexity of this. This is not an easy decision at all. I also noticed there isn't right now, I think someone mentioned this, maybe you did, any striping. Like I noticed from let's say the splash pad to the library door there on Water St., there's no walkway that's been painted on. Is that something that there was going to, we just haven't done it? There's no plan for that?

Jaynellen Hollowy - Right now, there's no plan, but that was the design that it really becomes a plaza when it's closed off to the public. So there's currently nothing on the docket to do those stripings that were pointed out.

Dana Davis - Because if it is a behavioral thing, as you thought, then you have to train people, right? Here's the crossing walk. Another thought I had was just trying out rubber [speed humps] rubber ones, right? That you can get almost temporary. It'd be interesting to not invest a whole lot and try that out, see if you can slow people down. Because really we're probably not going to solve the accidental running out. But we want people to slow down and be aware that this is a cautious area so go - go slowly. I'm wondering if something like that might be helpful in that area.

Brad Blanke - It's a good idea and I think the city already has some of those don't we? We used them at one time in Riverside Park.

Chief Kaminski - Yeah. They were mounted to the roadway. There were rubber ones in the roadway on Laboree Street between Boughton and Keyword maybe, or right around Keyword in that area. They were there. I know they were there for a while on the roadway.

I just, police department comment with closing Water Street. Washington Street is already horrible at Washington and Maine. Pushing traffic from Water up to there, where there are no traffic signs or signals, to me makes it even worse, especially with the proximity of Church Street, all the traffic that turns and everything else. We're just pushing a problem further down the road. That would be my one opinion. My second opinion is we do spend some time now already at the library, we do spend some time at the Town Square for issues, closing that roadway kind of restricts how we're getting in and out of there as well, and I would assume that Travis would say the same thing with apartment complexes and a new one going in, if he has, guaranteed he has EMS calls already at the apartment complexes, and every now and then we have a false alarm fire over there, so.

Dana Davis - Yeah, that slows down safety, emergency [vehicles]

Chief Kaminski - That pushes emergency traffic into different directions and onto smaller streets and all sorts of stuff.

Peg Checkai - I was gonna say too, Dana, there is this, as people get to the intersection, I've spent the last 25 or so years of my life looking out on South Water Street. People will speed up right at that corner

to get through the lights. And I don't know if that's why things end up with accidents, but you'll see it coming from both directions. There's nothing to see someone clipping by the library going 30 miles an hour.

Chief Kaminski - I have seen cities, and I can just name one of them off the top of my head. I have seen, like, West Allis. They have closed. This to me is too busy of a street to close, but I've seen them do it on smaller side streets with less traffic and like West Allis where they have a bar restaurant or something like that or two of them and they'll close the roadway because there's a lot of people who mill about and they've done that in the summer and they put up actual concrete barriers into the roadway to do those kinds of things. But again, it's nothing with the amount of traffic that we're dealing with, that I've seen it done.

Brad Blanke - Most of the comments that I had have already been made by Chief, John, and actually Peg as well. The one thing that I don't think has been mentioned is another intersection that will be impacted by this. The other end of Water Street, the corner of Milwaukee and Water, which is already a very dangerous intersection. I lived in Miller Ice Terrace for a couple of years and that intersection is...

Chief Kaminski - You can't see it to the east very well at all.

Brad Blanke - So this might push more traffic that way to another dangerous intersection. I think by closing one dangerous intersection, we simply are pushing the problem to other dangerous intersections.

Dana Davis - Really we should focus on how can we train people to...this is new and we have to slow down or something. Did you have comments about the...we're on

Eric Schmid - Yeah, so I apologize, I had the...got it wrong on my phone. Some of the comments I did have was concerned about not closing. Yeah. Because they wanted to know why it was even on the table. But this is what I would call another example of unintended consequences by decisions being made for other issues. Like somehow we're shocked that there's an increased number of traffic, an increased number of pedestrian traffic in this area, increasing the risk to everybody. I don't understand how we're shocked that this is working. Because we knew when we renovated the library, it was gonna bring in more people. Because that was the concept, to bring more people into the library, bring more foot track, provide more services to the community. We did the park for the same thing, bring more people downtown, bring more people to the community to make something nice and water for people to come visit. Well, if we're doing two things to draw people to downtown, it's going to draw people. So the fact that we're even having this conversation shows it's an unintended consequence or an ignored consequence. So closing it, it's only going to make that other section visible. And when you're on a bike, it's even worse. Because I've gone through there a lot of times. So it's going to just take people paying attention. I mean, they know it's a busy intersection, they have to pay attention. I mean, because you can't just close the street because it's just going to push the traffic somewhere else. It's going to either

going to push up Emmett, it's going to push out the water one, and you're going to have even more issues over there. So at least here we have traffic lights. We have a known stopping point that people are used to stopping at and taking turns on. And they know they have to slow down coming into it or coming across it. So at least it's a known thing to focus on, and it's going to take time to retrain people to look both ways. Yes, it's still a street, yes it's still as traffic, and you're just going to have to want to deal with it.

Dana Davis - What I'm hearing, your initial question was is there an appetite for closing it, and I think I'm hearing that there isn't an appetite for actually closing it for any extended period of time. Is that where you all are at?

Brad Blanke - With the exception of program events.

Eric Schmid - That special event was a budget vendor set up. And that was a temporary couple hour thing. Like we do have another street later this year. So. Right.

Stacey - We close the street a lot. Every Thursday and every Saturday.

Kristine - We close the street a lot.

Eric Schmid - Which I get complaints on every week.

Dana Davis - So what's the every Thursday?

Stacey - I shouldn't say every Thursday.

Kristine - I just, because this was already done before I came into this city, so I guess I just would like a little bit of history. What happened, where was the traffic rerouted when the street was closed for the construction?

Chief Kaminski - It would have been just pushed up anywhere, Washington Street or any of that.

Kristine - Was there added congestion there? Was there more accidents because of that?

Peg - The street was open for a good part of it.

Chief Kaminski - Yeah, really it was.

Peg - We didn't close it for any of our construction, and I think most of the park construction was done on the block. So it was open.

Kristine - I heard it was closed for a year, so I guess I was just wondering what was it about a year?

Chief Kaminski - I don't think it was closed that long, the roadway itself.

Kristine - And then as far as the construction happening for the T-Wall project and everything, they do have it for staging on the road area. So that will be closed then at that point for however long they're staging there. And that is supposed to happen at the same time if the bridge goes through for next year. So that's just for awareness. That portion will be closed.

Brad Blanke - Sorry to interrupt. I don't think we've approved them being able to stage on the road as of yet. They've requested it. I don't remember seeing anything come in front of me. So that hasn't

necessarily been approved yet. And I would have concerns with them staging construction vehicles on the road.

Kristine - Well, I mean, I'd have concerns about it as well for other reasons, but I mean, those are the things that we're dealing with as we're on the corner of two big construction things happening next year. So that, I guess, is from my standpoint. I don't know what's happening there. I do feel like, I mean, if we're talking about retraining, it is kind of a thing where you could just retrain people on where to go. There are a lot of events that we have where we are closing it quite often. And if we don't close it all the time, or even for a season, or what have you, we will need to come up with a barrier option. Because right now, what we're doing isn't working. I mean it is working, but it's not. Like it's a lot of a lot of work for all of us to be moving barriers and keep it. And it is kind of an eye sore. So I mean if we can't close it for seasons, if we have an option of an arm that would prohibit people from crossing if they're coming from the splash pad to closing it when we have events. I don't know, but I feel like that might be the route we have to go if it's a no, and then we just close it for events. The winter thing does concern me, just because that was what this part, from what I was told, what this part was meant to do. And I don't have another option.

Peg Checkai - I think Santa House is supposed to go down there too.

Chief Kaminski - I certainly don't think that road close signs are the barrier that should be used. They don't stop cars if something were to choose to go down that roadway. But I don't know what the next best option is that doesn't cost a decent amount of money.

Dana Davis - Well, that's where I was going next. If we decide not to close it for an extended period of time, apart from special events, where are we in the budgeting season? If we were to do lines, is there even time for that at this point, to do lines? Is there budget for lines? As far as a crosswalk, if we were to do a crosswalk?

Andrew Beyer - For the crosswalk, it's not recommended to put a crosswalk in the middle of a block. Cars really aren't trained to look for pedestrians in the middle of the block. It's at stop signs or stop lights. If we do go that route, there are some improvements we have to make as far as an ADA ramp with the technical warning fields and some signage. But as far as striping the center line, we can look at a cost to see where we're at in this year's budget. If it can happen this year, we can look at it. Otherwise, we can add it to next year's budget.

Eric Schmid - Andrew, for Jane, I'm pointing to, don't we have some of those old T-balls that you can fill with water as temporary barricades? Or do we never have those? For like road closure options?

Jaynellen - No, we have...

Eric Schmid - You know which ones I'm talking about, the little giant orange ones that you can use for portable options?

Jaynellen Holloway - Yep, the National Guard has them down on Bloomer Street, the fillable barricades, fillable Jersey barriers. We don't have any of those in our stock.

Eric Schmid - Because that'll stop traffic. Those big road closure signs, they go through the road closures of my house all the time. You put a couple of those up, you'll stop traffic pretty definitively. And you could stage them so that if you needed to move them, an emergency vehicle could. But it's a visible deterrent and most people recognize it's a T-wall and you don't go past the T-wall. The road closer signs people who live in that area, I just drive through there. Are they movable? They are. Once you can drain or fill them with water, it's relatively easy to do. That's why the guard uses them, the military uses them, because they're quick deployment units. I just don't know the cost of them.

Stacey - Do you remember the cost on the sample one that we had for the grand opening?

Kristine - Yes, I do. OK. I believe it was for all nine of those, plus the trailer that was included, I believe it was around \$80,000.

Chief Kaminski - And we looked at. And we looked at.

Kristine - No, the nine was sufficient. They decided to put more on the sidewalk portion of things, because you could easily drive up onto the sidewalk from main onto water. So they put some there. So we kind of used them all up. We could probably do four across on each end and be fine. It doesn't take care of any of the parades or anything that we have for cross. But I thought they were wonderful, super easy to move. If you know how to move them, I saw a woman fall over them actually in trying to move them, so it is, you have to know how. But I was also honestly thinking of bollards or like I said, like a gate that would prohibit people from passing one way and then passing the other way to leave.

Chief Kaminski - Yeah, we looked at trying to find a grant even, for the one that you had for the grant opening. We couldn't even find a grant that would apply for that.

Dana Davis - Let's see if Mr. Board, do you have any thoughts or any ideas?

Steve Board - Well I agree with everybody that I don't think we should close the street at least yet. The park's only been open two and a half months. I think there's some... We've got to get a better understanding of what's happening there. As far as training people, people are people. They're just going to be, to be candid, idiots from time to time, driving through stop signs and everything else. You can't prevent that, but I think there are things that we can do, like crosswalks. We could have put a crosswalk in the pavers that would have been obvious when it was constructed. We chose not to do that. I'm wondering if there are some kind of barriers, because the other thing I heard was kids crossing Water Street without going to the crosswalk. So what if there were barriers to close Water Street that could then be used on Water Street to keep kids from leaving the park and just racing across the street. So you could just move them, you don't have to store them, you'd have another use for them. I'm wondering if you could do something like that.

Jaynellen - If you were to consider the swing gate that Kristine mentioned earlier, you could pivot that in such a way that it could be closed, if the center point of the turning radius were put toward the splash pad. So on the east side of the intersection, when the gate is open to keep South Water Street open, that starts adding as this barrier that all the person on board is suggesting to corral the children to keep them somewhat inside the splash park. At the time then that you would need to close off the street, you could swing it across, and now it becomes a barricade for going south on South Water Street. And that would be fairly economical of the things that have been discussed this evening as a starting point. I

know this group has through the years that I've been involved with it, looked at problem solving in incremental steps.

But starting with baby steps and working up from there. And that would seem to me to be a way to, a place to start. That would be fairly economical. I'm hesitant to stripe the center of the street in that part of that area has pavers. Pavers are not really supposed, meant to be striped. It just isn't in the nature of the beast. Not to say you can't do it, but it's not recommended. So we can certainly look at that price and get back to this group if there's what the price would be and if there's funding this year to support that. But I do think the gate arm that Kristine is suggesting could easily be placed at Water Street in Maine on the south side of the intersection and then again on the property line of the town square, for the same reason that when we need to cross it off, close in that area, and it would make it from a standpoint of staff time and people that are involved in closing off this area, to have these events, it'd be a much quicker, smoother, easier way, less injury to our teams to do those things.

Steve Board - What, can I ask? So Jane Ellen, which department within the city should do that study?

Jaynellen - What study?

Steve Board - Do the research on the possibility of that. Cost effectively create that barrier. The swing arm.

Jaynellen - Engineering would gladly look into that. We've got interns.

Brad Blanke - That was going to be my question. Can you get us a cost, get some quotes or a cost estimate of what putting those in would be?

Eric Schmid - Manual ones or automatic ones?

Jaynellen - Manual. Manual. I love the way you're thinking though.

Eric Schmid - Well, but no, the reason I ask is I can see what you're talking about and they pivot on a 90 degree angle. But my concern is the length of that arm is going to talk, you're talking across in two lanes, so it's a 30 foot arm, give or take. When that 30-foot arm comes down, now you're...

Jaynellen - No, it swings horizontally. I'm not thinking vertical.

Kristine - So then there would be a post on the other side of the street that you would lock it into.

Eric Schmid - Okay, so then there would be a locking point for that?

Jaynellen - Yes. Both sides. Both sides you'd have to have a locking point.

Eric Schmid - Just the...well, that answers the one question. Reflective coating, tape, or lights?

Jaynellen - We'll look into it. But also, to John's suggestion of training people, because it would be, say, 25 to 30 feet long, in the area that would be, for lack of a better description, corralling the youth at the splash pad, their only place now to really cross is going to be at the intersection, where we want to encourage them to cross anyway.

Eric Schmid - So you're saying most of those arms when they're down are basically going to just about...

Kristine - It's going to be swinging like this. And then it's going to swing, and like this is closed. There's no vertical movement. It's all horizontal. Yeah, and then it's just going to swing open. And it's going to lock in place at this, at this, to like corral the kid, and then it's going to lock in place over here to close the water stream.

Peg - So it's just like it's just... You realize though, people aren't crossing here. People cross this way. People are crossing diagonally across the street to go into the front doors of the library. You're not going to corral them. I don't think, I don't see a lot of kids actually going at the intersection. They're playing in the pad and then they'll cross diagonally. Parents are bringing them to the restroom. I know we want people to enter through Main Street, which a lot of people do, but when we're open a lot of kids are coming through.

Jaynellen - I think we have to start somewhere.

Peg - What I was going to suggest, and this is the only reason it came to mind, if we're talking about retraining people, if you think about, and I hate to say the word, Oconomowoc, think about what it's like when you drive down their main street, okay? Right in the middle of the block, they have a crossing area for people. Now I go, I've been trained over these years, and I don't even live in Oconomowoc, to be cognizant of that intersection when you go into Oconomowoc. I don't remember if they have speed bumps, I know it's a crossing. I think there's splashing there. But I don't know about the rest of you, but when you go downtown Main Street or downtown on Oconomowoc, it's a very busy street. It's very narrow and they've retrained people how to, you know, cross back and forth in there. Just a suggestion.

Dana Davis - So we've been asked to review and take possible action on closing Water Street. Is there a motion that we want to present here tonight, or is there an action step that we wanna form into a motion?

Brad Blanke - I think that we've directed engineering to get quotes on those swing arms. And what I was kinda thinking is there'd be one at the south end, one at the north end. And if they were on opposite sides of the street, then when they were in the position to block pedestrian traffic, one could swing on the west side of Water Street. Thereby, if they did try to cross diagonally, then there's still a post there that they're going to have to climb over or go under. So basically, they're going to go, one's going to go like this, and then the other one would go like that.

Eric Schmid - So the other question is do we have the space from setback standpoint for DOT to take up that space on the sidewalk? Because now you're putting a physical barrier that is going to be in the right of way for the road. Now that's just another consequence for that swing arm to stop and lock into and so that's something we have to look at too is how is that going to impact, because it's going to impact storm removal, it's going to impact both sidewalk storm removal and street storm removal in regards to how it works in the wintertime. So these are all things that are the second, third, and fourth order of effect we're trying to solve that if we don't take into account now and just crush something, we're going to have even more problems later. So I think we need to look at all options.

Dana Davis - So it looks like we have a good plan. We're directing engineering to get close, and I think as a part of that, they're going to do the research to see if this is even feasible and whether it meets all the standards and everything. So are we all in agreement with that at this point, at that point of action? Okay. Are there any more comments about item number one then? Because the next one's similar but different.

Jaynellen - The one thing that I do want to point out is turnaround times. We're coming into budget season right now. And there's right in the throes of our Anna Street program. And I'm not aware of any funding source to fund this in the 2023. I guess what I'm asking for is the ability to possibly come back to this before the end of the year, but not necessarily at our September meeting with this information in that I'm not aware that even if we can get this done and returned by our September meeting, that there's budget to support.

Dana Davis - So what kind of time frame do you do you think you need realistically?

Jaynellen - I would be very comfortable with October.

Dana Davis -Two months? Okay. Is that okay with everybody? Okay. All right. Well, thank you, thank you for everybody with your comments. And it isn't, it's not easy. It's not an easy one.

END TRANSCRIPT