



# Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date:	December 17, 2024
Agenda Item:	Starin Road Closure
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Brad Marquardt, <a href="mailto:bmarquardt@whitewater-wi.gov">bmarquardt@whitewater-wi.gov</a> , 262-473-0139

## BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what, when, where, why)

The University is looking to improve the safety of pedestrians crossing Starin Road within the campus area. One possibility the University wanted to explore was closing Starin Road to vehicular traffic between Warhawk Drive and Prairie Street during weekday school hours. To see what issues might arise, Starin Road was closed to traffic Monday – Friday from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm from October 7 – October 18. Traffic cameras were installed on Main Street and Schwager Drive to collect vehicle data from October 7 – November 1.

Attached are the data files for Main Street and Schwager Drive. The Volume Change Summary tables show an increase, on average, of 541 more vehicles per day on Main Street and 838 more vehicles per day on Schwager Drive between the hours of 6:00 am and 6:00 pm during the weekday. This is an increase of 6.3% and 68.2% respectively during that timeframe. On Main Street the Average Week Day Traffic (AWDT) was 8,968 with Starin Road open and 9,454 with Starin Road closed. On Schwager Drive the AWDT was 1,448 with Starin Road open and 2,309 with Starin Road closed. The AWDT on Starin Road in February 2024 was 3,677.

Also attached are comments received from various city departments. In general, the consensus is to leave Starin Road open due to: reduced police response times, the additional traffic added to an already busy Main Street, pedestrian accidents on Main Street versus none on Starin Road, the closure of Starin Road not incorporating all of the busy campus crosswalks crossing Starin Road, and the unknowns with snow plowing operations.

At the Public Works meeting on December 10, 2024, the University indicated they had additional traffic counters on Prairie Street and Prince Street. Prairie Street had an increase of approximately 40 vehicles per day during the closure of Starin Road while Prince Street had an increase of approximately 400 vehicles per day.

Additional notes from Public Works Committee meeting can be found in the attachments.

## PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

At the September 17, 2024 Council meeting, the Council voted to temporary close Starin Road for a two-week trial period.

At the December 10, 2024 Public Works Committee meeting, the Committee recommended to Council to continue to move forward with the closure of Starin Road.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

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Unknown

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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The consensus recommendation from city staff is a motion not to move forward with the closure of Starin Road between Warhawk Drive and Prairie Street.

In lieu of closing the street, perhaps additional signage (2' X 3' yellow) could be added at Prince Street (eastbound) and at Graham Avenue (westbound). Suggested wording could be:

- ENTERING STUDENT CROSSING ZONES – USE CAUTION
- BE PREPARED TO STOP FOR CROSSING STUDENTS

If, however, the Council wants to continue to pursue the closure of Starin Road, staff recommends a motion to have the University work with City staff to formulate a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the specifics of such closure and bring the MOU back to Council for final authorization.

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ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

1. Public Works Committee Notes
2. Main St\_Volume Change Summary
3. Main St\_Starin Closed
4. Main St\_Starin Open
5. Schwager Dr\_Volume Change Summary
6. Schwager Dr\_Starin Closed
7. Schwager Dr\_Starin Open
8. City Department Responses
9. Resident Responses