



May 13, 2010

Westwood Neighborhood Resident

Dear Resident:

The City has completed surveys and cost estimates on providing a trail connection between Welker Avenue and the Walnut Creek Trail. We'd like to share our findings on three main issues related to trail location, trail width, and cost estimates.

#### TRAIL LOCATION

In June 2009, we presented two options for this trail connection: Option 1 was along the existing right-of-way at the end of 52<sup>nd</sup> Street; Option 2 was about 450 feet to the west, and was the recommended option.

Upon an on-site review with a City Engineer, we moved forward with surveying two potential alignments near the Option 2 site (shown as Options 2a and 2b on the enclosed graphic). That area has significant slopes, so we also surveyed a flatter option approximately 220 feet farther west, 760 feet from the existing right-of-way, and shown as Option 3 on the graphic. You may have seen survey markers at these locations earlier this year. Option 3 meets the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for not exceeding a 5 percent slope. Options 2a and 2b do not meet this ADA requirement.

#### TRAIL WIDTH

We understand that the neighborhood had requested a narrow trail connection. If we are to construct a paved trail, we recommend that it be at least an 8-foot wide for the following reasons:

- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guidelines – All of our trails are built in compliance with AASHTO guidelines, which recommend 10 feet as the minimum width and allows 8 feet width in “rare instances;”
- Ease of maintenance – trail maintenance personnel can drive vehicles and equipment along the trail for snow removal and other maintenance needs; and
- Facilitate two-way trail traffic – 5 feet is not a safe width for passing cyclists or other trail users.

#### COST ESTIMATES

The biggest cost involved in this project is the railroad crossing. Until we begin negotiations with the railroad, we can only guess what the cost of this crossing will be. We are using \$35,000 as a

preliminary estimate for the crossing. We will begin negotiations once we have settled on an alignment and identified sufficient funding.

To install a 10-foot wide trail at Option 3 is estimated to be approximately \$74,000 (including the railroad crossing). For comparison, to install a 10-foot wide trail along the existing right-of-way would be approximately \$81,000 (including the railroad crossing) due to its longer length. The value of the existing right-of-way is nominal since it is not a buildable lot, so there is no financial profit expected from the sale of that land.

It is possible to install an 8-foot wide trail in this location instead of 10-foot, which would save about \$2000 at the western location and about \$4000 at the existing right-of-way.

I welcome your comments and suggestions on all three of these issues and how we can create a connection to satisfy the needs of the neighborhood. Please feel free to email me at [msmoore@dmgov.org](mailto:msmoore@dmgov.org) or call 248-6349 to discuss.

Sincerely,

Mindy S. Moore  
Park Planner II

# Welker Avenue Trail Connection Options

