

## **FREQUENCY ASKED QUESTIONS**

The City has compiled this list of questions asked by residents. This list of questions will be updated to include new questions as needed.

### **General**

- **How was the trail route through West Central selected?**
- **What was the public process to create this project?**
- **How is this project being funded?**
- **How wide will the trail be?**
- **Will the Summit Blvd., Mission Ave. or West Point Rd. be narrowed?**
- **Will there still be on-street parking? Will any of the roads be converted to one way?**
- **Will homeowners lose a portion of their front yards?**
- **Why not build the trail adjacent to the Spokane River rather than through the neighborhood?**
- **What about snow removal?**

### **Safety**

- **Will the numerous driveways along this route be a safety hazard?**
- **Is this the only place where the Centennial Trail is routed through a neighborhood, business district or other areas with potential conflicts?**
- **Will this trail create issues for cyclists?**
- **Will allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to use the same trail create dangerous conditions?**
- **Why are curb extensions (curb bump outs) being proposed?**
- **Will the trail will invite additional dangers, such as garbage cans left in the right-of-way?**

### **Aesthetics**

- **Will the trail look like it does on Pettet Drive (Doomsday Hill)?**
- **Why build a trail that connects to the existing trail down Doomsday Hill? That trail is steep and leads to the T.J. Meenach Bridge which is too narrow for a trail.**
- **Will a fence be built along the trail?**

### **Environmental**

- **Will the trail improvements negatively impact the character of the historic Nettleton's Addition or any historic properties?**
- **What will be done to protect erosion if trees or vegetation along the bluff needs to be removed?**

### **General**

#### **How was the trail route through West Central selected?**

The selected Centennial Trail route dates back to the initial creation of the trail. Much of the Spokane River Centennial Trail was construction between 1989 and 1991 as part of the celebration of the Washington State Centennial. The Trail was designated a National Recreation Trail in 2010, joining 3 other recreational trails in 15 states. And in 2013, signage was added in West Central, further

delineating this section of trail. The Spokane River Centennial Trail includes about 40 miles of trail in Washington and connects with another 24 miles in North Idaho.

### **What was the public process to create this project?**

The project to build out this missing section was first highlighted in public plans in a study of gaps in the Centennial Trail done by the Friends of the Centennial Trail in 2007; the study highlighted this project as a priority. It was first added to the City of Spokane's public plans when it was added to the City's Bicycle Master Plan in 2009. The project also was included in a 2015 update to the Bicycle Master Plan and a 2017 update to the City's Comprehensive Plan as a Class 1 trail route. The project first appeared in the City's 6-year Transportation Plan in 2017, and it has been included in annual updates to this plan since then. In 2015, the City sought a grant for planning for the project, and it received \$150,000 for that work in April 2017. Construction funds were sought in February 2018, and a grant for construction was received in December 2018. Approvals of the various updates to plans are completed at City Plan Commission and City Council meetings that are open to the public.

### **How is this project being funded?**

This trail is mostly funded with a federal grant which has very specific requirements about what must be built and where.

### **How wide will the trail be?**

The trail will be 12-foot wide with the option of narrowing it to 10 feet in sections that are constrained by private property lines. Per the guidelines of the funding agency, the trail width cannot be less than 10 feet. Trail width beyond 10 to 12 feet consists of a required buffer strip which may or may not be paved depending on future input received from adjacent residents. The buffer strip is intended to keep obstructions back from the trail edge to promote safety.

### **Will the Summit Blvd., Mission Ave. or West Point Rd. be narrowed?**

In order to fit a trail within the selected route, either the road will need to be narrowed, parking removed or private property purchased. Based on input received from adjacent property owners, the City will not seek to acquire private property but will instead narrow the road to construct the trail.

### **Will there still be on-street parking? Will any of the roads be converted to one way?**

This project can be thought of as having three segments: Summit Blvd, Mission Ave. and West Point Rd. The appropriate method of balancing the requirements of the trail, reducing impacts to adjacent properties and the desires of the adjacent residents differ on each segment. West Point Road is scheduled to be converted into a one-way southbound. [See drawings elsewhere on this web page](#) for more information on each segment.

### **Will homeowners lose a portion of their front yards?**

Based on public input received at and following the November public meeting, the City is designing the trail such that essentially all portions of the trail will be on City-owned right of way.

Along West Point Rd., the back of the proposed trail will be in approximately the same location as the back of the existing sidewalk.

Along Mission Ave. the back of the proposed trail will be up to five feet closer to the adjacent home than the existing sidewalk but still within City right of way.

Please note that the property line (i.e., the city right of way line) is behind the curb by five to 10 feet, depending on location. If you want to know where your property line is, go to <https://maps.spokanecity.org/>

### **Why not build the trail adjacent to the Spokane River rather than through the neighborhood?**

A trail constructed adjacent to the Spokane River would be a desirable route. City staff have met with area residents to discuss various routes along the river. Unfortunately, any additional routes adjacent to the river are several times more expensive than the selected route and have significant environmental consequences (large retaining walls, excavation on a steep slope adjacent to the river, large scale tree removal, etc.).

The current project does not preclude a future project adjacent to the Spokane River, and it provides needed connectivity for West Central and neighborhoods to the north. The federal funds acquired for this project are not transferrable to a different route.

### **What about snow removal?**

For property abutting the trail, homeowners must adhere to the City Snow Response Plan, which requires City property owners to clear at minimum a 36-inch path along the pedestrian right-of-way adjacent to their properties. Adjacent residents will not be required to clear the full width of the trail.

Note that with the addition of the buffer zone between the trail and the street, much of the snow berm created by plow trucks will fit within the buffer zone which may make snow removal easier.

## **Safety**

### **Will the numerous driveways along this route be a safety hazard?**

The current trail route is not changing, and users of the route currently cross over these driveways. Driveways likely will be visually differentiated by changing the paving material from asphalt to concrete, signaling that trail users are approaching a driveway. Also, all but five of these driveways are U-shaped, which means that most driveway users won't be backing into the street.

### **Is this the only place where the Centennial Trail is routed through a neighborhood, business district, or other areas with potential conflicts?**

While it would be desirable for the Centennial Trail to be separated from neighborhoods, business districts, or other potential conflict areas as is the case through downtown Spokane, the reality is that the Centennial Trail is routed through congested areas along significant portions of its alignment. In these areas, the trail provides a viable alternative to driving to destinations in a vehicle.

Examples include:

- Riverfront Park (numerous pedestrians)
- Kendall Yards (numerous pedestrians)
- Farr Road south of Upriver Drive (numerous driveways)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Post Falls (numerous driveways in residential district)
- Downtown Coeur d'Alene (numerous driveways in residential district)

**Will this trail create issues for cyclists? That is, many cyclists will choose not to use the path because it still looks like a sidewalk and they will want to avoid all the driveways and so they will be in the road which will be narrower than before.**

When riding on a roadway, a cyclist has all the rights and responsibilities of a vehicle driver. When riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk, a cyclist has all of the rights responsibilities of a pedestrian. ([RCW 46.61.755](#), [RCW 46.61](#))

The Centennial Trail is not a sidewalk. It is a clearly established, signed shared-use pathway designed under the constraints of federal, state, and local engineering standards ([SMC 17H.010.260](#)). Pathways are defined as “facilities designated for use by commuters and recreational users on foot or bicycle ([SMC Chapter 17A.020 Definitions](#)).

### **Will allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to use the same trail create dangerous conditions?**

Shared use paths have been successfully used nationwide for many years, including here in Spokane with the 40-mile-long Centennial Trail. The trail design complies with AASHTO/WSDOT safety regulations for shared use paths.

Note that the Centennial Trail is not a sidewalk but rather a shared use pathway which, per city code ([SMC 17H.010.260](#)) is a facility “designated for use by commuters and recreational users on foot or bicycle ([SMC Chapter 17A.020 Definitions](#)).

Additionally, the City has codified pedestrian safety as a priority in [SMC 16A.84.020](#), which states “the City of Spokane desires an active, connected, equitable, sustainable, and complete transportation network for all users, maximizing innovation, access, choice, and options for all users in all four seasons...[and] the City of Spokane intends to remove barriers restricting expansion, safety, and the use of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.”

### **Why are curb extensions (curb bump outs) being proposed?**

One of the concerns the City has received is the high speed at which some vehicles travel along Summit Blvd/Mission Ave. Curb extensions have been shown to reduce vehicle speeds. In addition, curb extensions provide a protected area for on-street parking by routing cars away from the parked cars.

### **Will the trail will invite additional dangers, such as garbage cans left in the right-of-way?**

Placement of residential solid waste containers is regulated by [SMC 13.02.0310](#), which states that containers must be returned to their storage area by no later than 9 p.m. on their collection day. If left in the right-of-way, containers—or any objects—obstructing the right-of-way are regulated by [SMC 12.02.0737](#), which states that owners and occupants of property within the City shall not obstruct the public right of way, hinder the normal flow of pedestrian or street traffic, or render the public right of way unsafe. The creation of an obstruction is considered a nuisance pursuant to [SMC 12.02.0208](#).

## **Aesthetics**

### **Will the trail look like it does on Pettet Drive (Doomsday Hill)?**

The Centennial Trail section along Pettet Drive indeed meets AASHTO and DOT standards for a shared path, although traffic engineers are reviewing this section for potential striping improvements that could help clarify the intended buffer space.

Regarding trail slope along Pettet Drive, when a trail is constructed adjacent to an existing road, ADA permits the trail slope to match the slope of the existing adjacent roadway.

Regarding trail width along Pettit Drive, what exists is a 12-foot trail with a 2-foot buffer to separate trail users from adjacent traffic which together is 14-foot total paved width.

Rather than leaving this 2-foot trail buffer unpaved—which would be both unsightly since there would be no one to maintain it and a tripping hazard during Bloomsday when thousands of runners are traversing this stretch of the trail—the buffer strip was paved resulting in a 14-foot width trail—12 feet of trail for users and an additional two feet as a buffer space to separate trail users from adjacent Pettet Drive traffic.

**Why build a trail that connects to the existing trail down Doomsday Hill? That trail is steep and leads to the T.J. Meenach Bridge which is too narrow for a trail.**

The funding for this project is limited to work between Boone Avenue and Pettet Drive. There is a future project intended to address trail limitations on T.J. Meenach Bridge.

**Will a fence be built along the trail?**

The sidewalk that currently exists on the north/west side of Summit provides no protection along the steep sections of the bluff. With the widening of the trail, some portions of the trail will be closer to the edge of the bluff. The installation of a 4-foot railing provides needed safety improvements. To ensure the least amount of impact, the railing will be intermittent, only installed where it is needed to protect trail users. The railing will be designed to maintain views.

## **Environmental**

**Will the trail improvements negatively impact the character of the historic Nettleton's Addition or any historic properties?**

Although there are homes that border the Centennial Trail that are either listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Spokane Register of Historic Places, changes to the right of way such as sidewalks and trails are not generally considered to negatively impact the historic nature of the properties. Earlier in the planning stage, the City conducted the required assessments to determine any impact on the Nettleton's National Register Historic District. As such, the project was reviewed by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) on behalf of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) under provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) and 36 CFR Part 800. DAHP determined that the current project as proposed will have No Adverse Effect on historic properties within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The fact that the trail is in the vicinity of the historic district is not considered an impact to the historic resource itself.

**What will be done to protect erosion if trees or vegetation along the bluff needs to be removed?**

Any tree or vegetation removals will be evaluated by City engineers and arborists to determine where erosion mitigation is necessary.