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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Van Dorp and City Council Members
FROM: Kevin Plockmeyer, ACM of Infrastructure/City Services and Finance
SUBJECT: Washington Avenue Corridor Traffic and Pedestrian Study
DATE: August 14, 2026
CC: City Council Work Study and Action Items August 17, 2026

BACKGROUND

The City's 2026 Strategic Action Plan identifies Washington Avenue development and redevelopment as a priority. The action steps established by City Council include:

1. Identifying right-of-way constraints throughout the corridor.
2. Working with corridor stakeholders to better understand future plans, access needs, utility concerns, and related issues.
3. Developing a traffic-flow plan based on the identified right-of-way constraints and information gathered from corridor stakeholders.

The overall objective is to develop a vision for the future reconstruction of Washington Avenue that improves traffic flow and accessibility, supports adjacent property owners, and creates opportunities for downtown vibrancy and future economic development.

RIGHT-OF-WAY CONSTRAINTS

As an initial step in this process, staff worked with the City's engineering team to prepare the attached existing and conceptual proposed layout drawings for Washington Avenue between State Street and Carlton Street.

The drawings demonstrate that the City has a limited amount of public right-of-way throughout much of the corridor. In many locations, the existing roadway, sidewalks, utilities, drive approaches, and adjoining private improvements occupy nearly all of the available space. The available right-of-way is 50 feet or less through much of the corridor.

These constraints limit the City's ability to add meaningful green space, improve pedestrian accommodations, or create separation between the roadway and sidewalk while maintaining the existing roadway configuration. Although acquiring additional right-of-way could provide



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more flexibility, staff believes the likelihood of obtaining sufficient property throughout the entire corridor is limited and could add considerable cost and complexity to the project.

The conceptual proposed-layout drawing illustrates one possible approach to creating additional space within the existing right-of-way. Under this concept, Washington Avenue would be reduced from its current three-lane configuration to one travel lane in each direction. The continuous center left-turn lane would be removed, allowing portions of the existing pavement width to be reallocated for sidewalks, green space, and other corridor improvements.

This concept is preliminary and is not being presented for final approval. Before investing additional time in design and stakeholder engagement, staff would like City Council's initial reaction to the possibility of removing the center left-turn lane. If City Council is not comfortable exploring this option, staff would reconsider the corridor objectives and the range of improvements that can realistically be accommodated within the existing right-of-way.

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN STUDY

If City Council is supportive of further evaluating the two-lane concept, the next step would be to complete a professional traffic and pedestrian study.

Eberle Traffic Solutions has submitted a proposal to analyze Washington Avenue between State Street and Carlton Street. The proposed intersection study would include weekday morning and afternoon turning-movement counts at State, Elm, Church, Centennial, Maple, and Carlton Streets. The consultant would model both existing and future traffic conditions, evaluate roadway capacity and queue lengths, identify potential operational deficiencies, and recommend improvements where necessary.

Staff also recommends completing the optional pedestrian assessment. This work would include pedestrian counts at the corridor intersections and at three existing mid-block crossings. The assessment would evaluate how the crossings are being used and whether modifications such as improved signage, pavement markings, crossing relocation, or sidewalk-ramp realignment should be considered.

The final report would also include a review of the most recent five years of available crash data and recommendations addressing any identified safety concerns. The study is expected to be completed within four to six weeks after authorization.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council provide direction regarding whether the removal of the center left-turn lane should continue to be evaluated as part of the Washington Avenue corridor-planning process.

If City Council is supportive of further consideration, staff recommends approval of the Eberle Traffic Solutions proposal for both the intersection traffic analysis and the mid-block pedestrian analysis for a total contract amount not to exceed \$17,568, inclusive of reimbursable expenses.



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The study would provide the technical information needed to determine whether the proposed roadway configuration can safely and effectively serve current and future traffic and pedestrian needs before the City proceeds with additional design or stakeholder engagement.

SUGGESTED MOTION

City Council approve the proposal from Eberle Traffic Solutions for the Washington Avenue intersection traffic analysis and mid-block pedestrian analysis in a total amount not to exceed \$17,568.

Kevin Plockmeyer, ACM of Infrastructure/City Services and Finance