



WYOMING Department of Transportation

"Provide a safe and effective transportation system"

3200 Elk Street, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901



October 3, 2024

Teton County Commission
P.O. Box 3594
Jackson, WY 83001

Dear Chairman Propst and Teton County Commissioners,

This letter serves as a comprehensive response to the questions raised by the Teton County Board of Commissioners during the recent WYDOT STIP meeting held on August 26, 2024 and related questions recently posed to County staff by Mr. Tim Young. We aim to provide clarity and information on the topics discussed. We've categorized these questions and provided responses.

Crossings and Pathways

- **Q: Can we explore the possibility of an underpass on WYO 390 near Anderson Lane for west side access?**
 - **A:** Yes, WYDOT is open to evaluating the possibility of an underpass. Pathway facilities under state highways can also be authorized through encroachment permits and cooperative agreements with WYDOT, as seen throughout other Teton County projects.
- **Q: Can we improve safety for people crossing WYO 390 to the west side by adding surface treatments or flashing beacons?**
 - **A:** Due to WY 390's heavy and fast traffic, at-grade crosswalks with flashing beacons or buttons could create a false sense of security for bicyclists and pedestrians, disrupt traffic flow, and therefore are unsafe. As mentioned, grade-separated pathways can be built under encroachment and cooperative agreements with WYDOT.
- **Q: Can we connect a pathway across WYO 390 at Millwood subdivision?**
 - **A:** WYDOT is open to evaluating a grade-separated crossing at this location. Please refer to responses above.

- **Q: Will the pathway on WYO 22 be non-negotiable?**
 - **A:** This question is unclear. A pathway along WY 22 will be included in the WY 22 Corridor Project and has been shown on alternative typical sections shown to stakeholders and the public. The project's Purpose and Need Statement cites the need to maintain bicycle and pedestrian connectivity along the corridor.
- **Q: How does condemnation work if needed for the pathway?**
 - **A:** County pathways within WY 22 ROW east of WY 390 were constructed within highway right-of-way and are currently under encroachment permits with WYDOT. The process of securing the pathway's location within the ROW was lengthy for the county, as adjacent landowners were unwilling to grant easements on their land.

If any proposed highway improvements would displace these pathways, per the permit conditions, the county would be responsible for relocating the pathways at its own expense. WYDOT is not obligated to compensate the county any new ROW required for pathway relocation or participate in its relocation. The pathway is not WYDOT property.

For the WY 22 NEPA analysis, WYDOT will evaluate potential impacts from alternatives carried forward for details analysis. This includes effects to private property, approaches, irrigation, and more. Currently, it is unclear if additional ROW will be needed as the alternative selection process is ongoing. As alternative design advances and becomes more detailed, the project team will better understand any potential impacts from pathway relocation. A more detailed evaluation will occur during the NEPA phase.

In acquiring ROW for its projects, WYDOT works closely and cooperatively with affected landowners to reach agreement on property or easement acquisition and condemnation is a last resort. We believe that Teton County would take a similar approach should ROW be required for pathway relocation.

- **Q: Can we improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles in downtown Wilson by implementing two crosswalks and will the crosswalks have beacons?**
 - A:** The Wilson Multi-modal Study, in which WYDOT participated, evaluated these safety needs and some improvements are included in part of Teton County's BUILD project. The study recommends two crosswalks, one at Fall Creek and one near Ida Street.

Regarding beacons, the Wilson Multi-Modal Study states that any traffic control devices, including beacons, must be evaluated with respect to warrants prior to consideration. Criteria for beacons are found in [WYDOT's Pedestrian and School Traffic Control Manual](#).

- **Q: Can the sidewalk be widened near Garman trail during the Flat Creek bridge project?**
 - **A:** The scope of the Flat Creek Bridge project (B233007 District Bridge Rehab) is limited to rehabilitation and surface improvements, not bridge replacement and widening. Existing limitations in footprint and right-of-way prevented sidewalk widening during this work but if, as part of a future project, WYDOT determines the Flat Creek bridge should be replaced, this future project could consider additional or widened sidewalks.

- **Q: Should the WY22 pathway be a component of the “Core Concept”?**
 - **A:** WYDOT recognizes the importance of the pathways along WY 22 as a key transportation resource and is considering all modes of transportation in the corridor as part of the project’s purpose to improving safety and mobility in the project area.
The WY 22 Corridor Project Team worked with the town, county, and stakeholders in developing an alternatives evaluation process, documented in an alternatives evaluation process memorandum (memo). This process involves categorizing improvements as either core concepts or supplemental improvements. A core concept is defined as a mainline or transportation linkage alternative. A mainline alternative reflects the number and types of lanes on WY-22.

Understanding the importance of the pathways to the corridor, the memo’s screening criteria includes a criterion that, in order for an alternative to meet the project’s purpose and need, it must “support a multimodal corridor and maintain pathway connectivity”. Therefore, alternatives that do not meet this screening criteria—because they cannot maintain pathway connectivity—are eliminated from further consideration. Categorizing pathways improvements as supplemental does not diminish their importance; rather, it means that these improvements—by themselves—cannot fully meet the project purpose and need.

- **Q: Why were pathways shown on every Mainline Alternative typical section at the WYDOT February 2024 meeting, but are not shown on the Alternatives on the website today?**

A: As noted above, pathway improvements are categorized as supplemental elements. The Alternatives page on the project website defines this term and refers website visitors to the public meeting #2 exhibits and handout materials for a complete list of supplemental elements. A hyperlink is provided.

A representation of the pathway is included in the mainline alternative typical cross sections presented at Public Meeting #2. The [Get Involved](#) page on the project website provides a link to the meeting exhibits with typical sections and list of supplemental items.

Pathway connectivity and placement will be further considered as part of the Level 2 alternatives evaluation using screening criteria that require the alternative

to maintain pathway connectivity. It's important to recognize the WY 22 alternatives analysis process and criteria were developed in close coordination with Teton County/Town staff and stakeholder input through the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). A representative from the Friends of Pathways is on the PAC.

- **Q: What is the status of the project response to the Town/County Scoping letter of July 12, 2022?**
 - **A:** WYDOT reviewed the Town/County scoping letter and provided a written response in November of 2023. This response addressed several questions summarized above; please refer to responses to these questions. Other questions are addressed below.
 - **The requirement for ROW to include acquisition as needed for bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation?**
 - WYDOT will continue to coordinate with the town and Teton County as the project develops and potential impacts to the pathway system are known. Any pathway relocation, if needed, would be guided by previous WYDOT and County agreements regarding pathway use in the public right-of-way. WYDOT agrees the project should be positioned for federal and state funding opportunities to the extent the recommended improvements best meet the project's purpose and need and goals.
 - **The designation of the pathway as a 4(f) facility?**
 - The pathway along WY 22 serves as a critical link in the transportation network of the area. Because it's primarily serves as a transportation facility and existing in transportation ROW, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), who ultimately have legal authority to determine Section 4(f) eligibility, has indicated the pathway is not a Section 4(f) resource. This is consistent with how the pathway was evaluated in the PEL and Tribal Trails Connector studies. FHWA will provide a separate letter outlining this determination.

WY 22 Improvements

- **Q: What will happen with WYO 22 after the bridge construction, and how can the community be involved in future improvements?**
 - **A:** The community can stay involved with the WY 22 Corridor Project through public meetings, engaging representatives serving on the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and via the project website (<https://wy22corridor.com/>), where comments can be made. WYDOT is constantly seeking public comment and, to stay informed, please visit the WY 22 Corridor Project website at <https://wy22corridor.com/>. If you have questions that aren't addressed by the website, including the FAQ page, please contact a member of the project team.

- **Q: Wilson has put together a safety and design committee. How will their solutions be incorporated into the improvements on WYO 22?**
 - **A:** The Wilson Safety and Design Committee is encouraged to get and stay involved via participation in the public engagement process for the WY22 Corridor Project Study. The committee can share feedback with the Wilson PAC members, participate in public meetings, and provide written comments. WYDOT has and will continue to consider input regarding WY 22 Corridor Planning from the Wilson Advocacy Steering Committee, including comments from Camille Obering as well as the March 13, 2023 comment received from Tim Young on behalf of the Committee.
- **Q: How can we make it easier to get on and off of WYO 22 in Wilson?**

A: WYDOT acknowledges that turning onto and off WYO 22 in Wilson can be difficult, especially during peak travel hours. The Teton Mobility Corridor Improvements (TMCI) project would add a center refuge lane on WY 22 in Wilson from the commercial core to Wilson Elementary School.

The Wilson Multi-modal Study explored other solutions, but many were deemed infeasible due to the lack of a local street network and high WY 22 traffic volumes. The findings from the Wilson Multimodal Study will be considered in the Level 2 alternatives evaluation phase of the WY 22 Corridor Project.
- **Q: What are the plans for a linkage study on WYO 390?**
 - **A:** WYDOT completed the Wyoming Highways 22 and 390 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study in 2014. The PEL study, available on the project website [here](#), can be used as a starting point for a future NEPA process along WYO 390. At present, WYDOT is not planning on conducting another PEL for WYO 390.
- **Q: Is the “do nothing” option completely off the table for the WYO 22 corridor project?**
 - **A:** No. A “do nothing” or No Build Alternative is included in the alternatives currently being evaluated and will be evaluated in greater detail during the NEPA phase.
- **Q: What is the current status of lane alternatives in the WYO 22 corridor study?**
 - **A:** Please refer to the Alternatives page of the [project website](#) for status. The range of alternatives was developed in coordination with the town, county, and Project Advisory Committee then presented to the public at two public meetings in February 2024. Several Level 1 core alternatives or concepts were eliminated from further consideration.
- **Q: How will condemnation or property acquisitions be determined for the WYO 22 corridor project if WYDOT or Teton County cannot obtain the necessary easements?**
 - **A:** This question isn’t clear. The potential need for property acquisitions will be identified as alternative design advances and will be determined during the final design and ROW phases.


- **Q: Do all current alternatives being considered include the tribal trail connector?**
 - **A:** No. The Tribal Trail Connector is a core concept that advanced to Level 2 evaluation, along with a No Build Alternative that would not extend Tribal Trail Road to WY 22.
- **Q: What impact do Build grant projects have on the WY 22 Corridor Project Study alternatives?**
 - **A:** The Teton Mobility Corridor Improvements BUILD Grant Project includes multimodal improvements along the ID-33/WY-22 corridor. The enhancements for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists will help address the WY 22 Project's transportation needs and goals. Because these improvements are programmed and funded, they are included in the WY 22 Project's No Build Alternative. In developing the Level 2 alternatives, WYDOT will determine if other highway, pathway, and other improvements are needed to meet the project Purpose and Need. Please refer to response below.
- **Q: For segment 3, why are the only options "no action or 3-lane"? What happened to the "2-lane low build" option that Wilson wants to retain for further study in segment 3?**
 - **A:** A 2-Lane Low Build alternative cannot be considered in Segment 3 of the WY-22 Corridor Project because a center turn lane will be constructed as part of the BUILD grant project. Since the No Action Alternative in Segment 3 must include this center turn lane, a 2-lane option is not feasible; the minimum roadway cross section is 3 lanes. More information on the Teton County BUILD Grants can be found [here](#). The 3-Lane Low Build Alternative in Segment 3 will likely include minor multi-modal and intersection improvements.

General Questions (from STIP meeting)

- **Q: Can the community put a project on the "shelf"?**
 - **A:** This question isn't clear. The community can provide input on STIP projects and can/do comment on project priorities. That said, "shelf projects" typically are projects that are fully designed and ready for bid.
- **Q: Can the community meet prior to the STIP to put their needs into the STIP?**
 - **A:** The community can and does comment and share their needs with WYDOT. WYDOT hears from the community in many ways and through different forums, working closely with Town and County Staff, working with urban systems committee, the TAC, and in various other community events and meetings within Teton County. STIP comments can be provided and are collected 365 days throughout the year. Comments may be submitted via a [contact form](#) or by mail to 5300 Bishop Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Also, WYDOT accepts public comment via an [interactive map](#).

We hope this letter provides clarity on these subjects. To help in disseminating this information to others, WYDOT will update the FAQs on the WY 22 Corridor Project website with information from these responses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Eddins".

John B. Eddins, P.E. WYDOT District 3 Engineer

cc: Tom DeHoff, Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations
Scott Gamo, Environmental Services Manager
Keith Fulton, Assistant Chief Engineer for Engineering & Planning
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TetonCountyResponseLetter03OCT2024FINAL

Final Audit Report

2024-10-03

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