

Thank you for your comments and questions about the Brezee Creek Culvert Replacement and 4th Street Widening Project. The topics listed below reflect feedback received to date during public meetings as well as those regarding the Virtual Open House released the week of October 19, 2020. This document will be updated periodically to address new frequently asked questions.



## CITY OF LA CENTER | BREZEE CREEK CULVERT REPLACEMENT & 4TH STREET WIDENING FAQ

### TRAFFIC SIGNAL VS. ROUNDABOUT



**Comment:** Include the roundabout alternative in the scope of the 4th Street widening project. If the budget is unavailable for the roundabout alternative at the time of the 4th Street widening, the do nothing alternative should be chosen until funds are available. Signalization poses a significantly higher statistical risk to pedestrians than a stop sign controlled intersection. An increased risk to pedestrians is unacceptable for a primary intersection connecting the parks and schools of La Center.

#### Background

- Safety is paramount to both the design team and City staff who are working on this project.
- The original realignment of Highland Road and 4th Street, which took place in 2008, was designed to support a future traffic signal at this intersection.
- The posted speed limit of 4th Street is 25 mph with a reduction to 20 mph within the school zone while children are present. For a low-speed corridor of this type, both a signal and roundabout effectively provide a safe configuration for all users.

#### Design Process

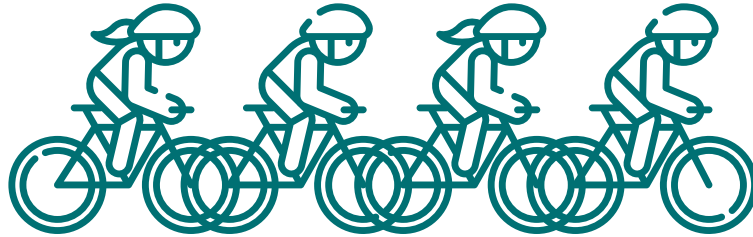
- As part of the intersection design process completed during the current Brezee Creek Culvert Replacement/4th Street Widening Project, a traffic study and report were completed.
- Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of vehicular traffic flow, reflecting indicators such as speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, and convenience.
- The LOS for the Highland Road and 4th Street intersection is projected to be LOS F (failing) by 2040 if left as-is.
- According to LOS guidelines set forth by the City of La Center, if the LOS exceeds D, the intersection fails, and an intersection improvement is required.

#### Comparison

- A decision to use a signal or roundabout to address a deficient intersection, in this case Highland Road and 4th Street, requires numerous factors to be considered. For the Highland Road and 4th Street intersection, both alternatives (roundabout and signalization) would provide the necessary safety and LOS improvements required by City guidelines.
- However, for this specific intersection in a low-speed corridor, a signal provides safe crossing routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly school children by requiring traffic to completely stop, offering visibility, and providing an allotted amount of time for pedestrian and bicyclist passage through the intersection.
- A signal provides safety and LOS improvements with a significantly lower construction cost, reduced property impacts and less right-of-way acquisition (the City purchasing property from private owners or public agencies).
- The analysis of available accident data completed as part of the Project development at this intersection reveals that only a single incident has occurred. The installation of a signal could effectively prevent this type of accident in the future.

## CITY OF LA CENTER | BREZEE CREEK CULVERT REPLACEMENT & 4TH STREET WIDENING FAQ

### CYCLE TRACK



**Comment:** Remove and replace the two six-foot unprotected bicycle lanes with a two lane, bicycle boulevard with a planter strip barrier along the southerly side. As a result, safe travel will be facilitated between the parks and schools along this corridor.

#### Long-Term Considerations

- The City of La Center has not previously planned or implemented a cycle track.
- To plan for a cycle track, the City would need to prepare an overall plan for addressing how bicyclists would travel along a street corridor or a street network.
- If a future cycle track were to be planned for 4th Street with connections to Lockwood Creek Road to the east and Pacific Highway to the north, future improvements along this corridor would need to be investigated.

#### Potential Impacts

- The downtown street corridor is currently 40-foot wide in most locations and includes parking. The cycle track with vegetated separation that has been suggested during presentations to the City of La Center Planning Commission is 15 feet wide, a width that would likely result in the modification of the downtown 4th Street corridor and eliminate parking for all businesses within that corridor.
- If the Brezee Creek Culvert Replacement /4th Street Widening Project were to incorporate a cycle track on one side of the street (say, the south side), it would result in elimination of a bike lane on the other side (north side) of the street. This would require westbound cyclists to cross the street at the Highland Road intersection, and then at Cedar Avenue, cross back to the north side.
- If they chose not to cross at the Highland Road intersection, they would be in the travel lane with vehicles. If they were westbound in the cycle track, but chose not to cross back to the north at Cedar Avenue, they would be travelling the wrong way in the eastbound lane west of Cedar Avenue. Since current shoulders are available on both sides of the street, east and west of the project limits, it is safer and more easily accessible to have a bike lane on both sides of the street. Additionally, the use of designated bicycle lanes on both sides of the street follows the design criteria of "Complete Streets," an ordinance recently adopted by La Center City Council and cited in the grant funding application for this project.