



# BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEMO

To: **Common Council**

From: Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Committee

Date: 5/3/2024

Subject: 90-day trial to close all slip lanes at the intersection of North Avenue and Wauwatosa Avenue

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## A. Background/Rationale

The intersection has significant use by pedestrians given proximity to City Hall/Library, Longfellow Middle School, and transit users.

Slip lanes are no longer considered best practice in urban transportation design according to NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) due to the safety issues for bicycle and pedestrian users (<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersections/intersection-design-principles/>). Benefits of the slip lane closure include easier and safer crossing of the intersection by bicycle and pedestrian users, more space for users to wait to cross the intersection, and slower turning traffic speeds.

The intersection is anticipated to be reconstructed as a part of either the upcoming North Ave project or the upcoming Wauwatosa Ave project. Given the timeline the Committee feels the temporary closure will give the City important information for the redesign and allow users provide feedback.

The temporary closure of the slip lanes will be completed inexpensively using construction barrels or bollards. A semi-permanent solution would be available should the 90-day treatment prove successful. Semi-permanent solutions could include paint, large planters, and concrete barriers.

## B. Key Issues for Consideration

In order to provide the maximum safety benefit, the Committee recommends that the trial occurs when students will be present. Given the approval timeline, it is/was not possible to implement the trail during the 2023-24 school year.

The City has been awarded a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant to study close calls/near misses at the intersection. It is anticipated that this data collection will occur in August or September of 2024. The data collection requires that the slip-lanes be open to traffic. In order to prevent closing, re-opening, then potentially re-closing the slip-lanes; the Committee recommends the slip lane closure to occur after the conclusion of the SS4A data collection.

The Committee successfully coordinated with City Staff and the Transportation Affairs committee to implement a 90-day trial to close the south-bound slip lane at the intersection of Menomonee River Parkway and North Avenue. At the conclusion of the trial, after receiving positive feedback from the public, and a delay to the intersection reconstruction project, City staff then provided a semi-permanent solution by installing curb & gutter.



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## C. Requested Action

Recommendation to the Transportation Affairs Committee for a 90-day trial to close all slip lanes at the intersection of North Avenue and Wauwatosa Avenue following the conclusion of the SS4A grant data collection which may be paired with no right turn on red policy at the discretion of Engineering staff.