



Pennsylvania Avenue Flood Repair Public Comments

05.12.2014

Purpose

- *Pennsylvania Avenue was damaged during the September 2013 flood and the City of Boulder is evaluating different options for repairs of the section of road between 6th and 7th streets, where Gregory Canyon Creek crosses the roadway. We asked members of the community to choose one of three alternatives or share another alternative with us.*
 - *Alternative 1: Replace the existing culvert (drainage pipe) and rebuild the roadway to pre-flood conditions.*
 - *Alternative 2: Remove the culvert and roadway above the creek, close the road to through traffic and build a pedestrian bridge over the creek.*
 - *Alternative 3: Remove the culvert and construct a new roadway with a significantly larger culvert or a vehicular bridge over the creek.*

Summary of Public Comments

General Comments

- **Alternative 1: 4 in favor**
 - Traffic on the road and school access is better mitigated on option 1. Option 2 looks like it would cause more blockage.
 - There would be through traffic, less congestion, a paved road, and less mud. School parking traffic will be decreased if back to pre-flood conditions. There would be less speeding traffic to suddenly stop at the closed road and dead end to turn around.
- **Alternative 2: 114 in favor**
 - Alternative two is much better for our neighborhood.
 - The culvert will continue to get clogged and spill over.
 - This has the greatest opportunity to mitigate future property damage from structure blockage and volume.
 - The culvert narrowing the creek bed at Pennsylvania caused the flooding west of the creek; Therefore if it is restored as it was there will be a problem of liability. It also seems that option two is less expensive.
 - Regardless of the alternative, the type of maintenance upstream to the head waters is critical for safety. The flood in September 2013 highlighted the limitations of culverts. Alternative two is consistent with City Council's goals of encouraging pedestrian traffic as opposed to vehicular traffic.

- I would like the peaceful space and green belt. There would be calmer traffic during school when kids are walking and a significant water flow improvement during flood episodes.
- It's very nice to see the creek again from the bridge. We can manage very well without this street and have been doing so since mid-September. Thank you for finding some funding to get started on the Gregory Creek flood plain mitigation. We know there are lots of mitigation needs elsewhere, but please don't forget that Gregory Creek needs more attention sometime in the future.
- Adequate access exists without Pennsylvania. Why rebuild it?
- The chance of the road washing out again will be lessened. A pedestrian bridge would be nice for the neighborhood. We walk our dog in the neighborhood a lot. Option two is a safer alternative. The children at Flatiron Elementary will have to contend with less traffic on Pennsylvania. Option one would risk rocks getting caught in the culvert again.
- If option two is selected, please move the west-side cul-de-sac further west.
- Great for habitat/wildlife restoration and a safe route for bikes, pedestrians and flood mitigation.
- Use the east side of the bridge area as a family meeting area for walking and cycling families. Pennsylvania can be a riding route to 6th. 6th should be a marked bike route to University and down to the Boulder Creek Path. Benches and bike racks should be provided. Thanks!
- This will not eliminate future flooding. The culvert under 7th gets blocked every time we have a severe thunderstorm. The grate catches debris and blocks very quickly.
- Pedestrian friendly.
- Better neighborhoods.
- This street hardly has any traffic to begin with. The pedestrian bridge close to the school would be a great addition!
- Option #2 sounds like a much better fit for the neighborhood!
- This would be so nice for walking my kids to school!
- This culvert caused my house to flood! Rebuilding it the same way is just plain stupid! Having a pedestrian bridge and cul-de-sac is the best idea I have heard from the city in years!
- I think a pedestrian bridge here would be a great addition for no extra cost! These kinds of options continue to make Boulder the special place it is.
- It seems like option 2 is clearly the right solution. Why rebuild something that will be blown out again? Let the stream run naturally as it was intended. Thanks for the opportunity to provide this input.
- I visit the neighborhood often and would enjoy walking over the foot bridge and seeing the stream below. There doesn't seem to be enough traffic to warrant rebuilding the road/culvert.
- Having seen firsthand the devastation that the clogged culverts caused throughout Boulder with the floods in September, I'm inclined to say where

there is an opportunity to allow water to flow in a more natural manner and still allow access to communities, this is the appropriate way to proceed.

- I am a fan of anything to improve pedestrian access to our beautiful creek.
- As someone who grew up in the neighborhood and still lives in town I like the second idea. Seems to be a much better idea for flood control and the idea of an open creek bed through there seems kind of nice. If it floods again you're going to have the exact same problem if you build it back.
- Let the stream flow!
- The pedestrian bridge option is a great one for this neighborhood!
- Pennsylvania Ave has a number of issues that make for an accident waiting to happen. These issues include: Icy conditions - due to lack of snow removal and direct sunlight, steep grades - west side, blind corners - Dean Pl. Reducing the amount of traffic by replacing the culvert with a foot bridge would lessen the risk of an accident on this street.
- I live on Pennsylvania and Gregory Creek goes under my deck. I would LOVE Option 2 with a pedestrian bridge. I think it offers a safe route to school for students walking or biking as well as slows down and/or lessens the traffic impact before and after school. In terms of emergency vehicles, since Pennsylvania only runs between 6th and 7th, it is already confusing and difficult to find so improved mapping and signage could effectively bring attention as to how to reach us on the West side via 6th or Dean Place. I also really like that this option allows for better wildlife and habitat restoration along with flood mitigation, in particular for the folks downstream.
- I am a big proponent of Alternative Two. I think any chance to restore a stream corridor should be capitalized on. There are ecological/habitat benefits, safety benefits regarding flood control and aesthetic benefits for those living there. I'm all for number 2!
- Very hopeful that we can begin a small step of prioritizing people traffic over car traffic.
- This is a really great opportunity to decrease flood risk while re-building! The extra cost of a pedestrian bridge is absolutely worth it for the downstream flood reduction.
- This seems like a great opportunity to increase multi-use pathways in Boulder. I have been in this area often and agree that drivers often speed through, even though there is a school nearby. It is such a beautiful area, would love to see it become more pedestrian friendly.
- I live at 637 Pennsylvania Ave and would like the pedestrian bridge please
- Given the proximity to the school building I think it makes sense to reduce some traffic in this area.
- Option #2 would improve the pedestrian character of the neighborhood and provide important flood relief that could not easily be obtained by a culvert.
- It seems like an option to take into account future flooding would be a good idea. Does local traffic require a bridge?

- Option 2 is a nice compromise. Flood improvements for future storms but at more than half the cost of a vehicular bridge.
- #2 has the most positive attributes.
- great job with some good alternatives --thanks staff
- Versus option 1, Option 2 seems like the better long-term compromise that's potentially a good investment capable of preventing damage otherwise in the future. With flooding though, it's a zero-sum game---every link of the chain would need to be more robust in order to prevent problems. Making one link stronger may have little net positive effect to the city. If this is one of the weakest links, then by all means, please treat as such.
- As a parent of students at Flatirons Elementary, I love the idea of closing this dangerous street to vehicles and walking my kids to school over a pedestrian bridge.
- It is imperative to our neighborhood that Alternative TWO is implemented, since the pre-flood condition is the one which enabled the flooding in the first place. The cost to restore our home is now close to \$50,000, and we know that others in our area have spent as much or more. We are asking the city in good conscience and good faith to help us to keep this from happening again.
- It is option number two which is most beneficial to our neighborhood, as it would allow more flood conveyance AND, very importantly, would interrupt the speeding and dangerous driving on Pennsylvania. The school already has good access on nearby streets, and the pedestrian bridge would be available for everyone. Thanks for your work on this.
- I live adjacent to the existing culvert and am in strong support of increasing the flood conveyance capacity. Option 2 is the most reasonable cost option that accomplishes this.
- Alt. 2 has, by far, the strongest support from those effected by this problem - those who were directly flooded by the breach of Penn. Ave. It does feel like the estimate for this repair could be greatly reduced by looking at simpler options for the bridge. Perhaps a use of pressure treated lumber beams instead of metal. The city cannot really choose Alt. 1 since that would put it in the position of intentionally creating a greater risk of flood and the possible liability. And since it is 7 months since the flood and nothing has been done, I see no value at this point of its being the fastest fix. That time is long past. It also seems the estimate for this job is way too low. Alt. 3 is too expensive and there is no good reason to do it. A final cheapest alternative would be to simply remove the ton of gravel that the city dumped in the hole, which raised the likelihood of further flooding, and fence the whole creek gap off on both sides at Penn. Ave. and have no access.
- Yes to a pedestrian bridge!
- Pedestrian Bridge seems wonderful!
- I hope this can still be received. I live on Pennsylvania and think this option is the best solution; for pedestrian/bike safety and access, wildlife habitat and flood mitigation.

- **Alternative 3: 7 in favor**
 - Car bridge or better yet, a draw bridge.
 - Square opening (rock wall exposed in flood) with roadway over (open to cars).
 - Build a vehicular/pedestrian bridge or street and keep flow way open.
 - Car bridge.
 - Re-engineer the culvert to convey flow consistent with expected flow from culverts above and open street to vehicle traffic as well as pedestrian traffic. Flatirons Elementary School has been open well over 50 years and will be most affected by the decision. It is considered by Flatirons staff that closing the street would have a negative effect on the traffic flow relative to school operations.
 - The biggest push to close the street thus far has come from a resident who moved in to the neighborhood 8 months ago and has stated he was "tired of having cars from the school park on Pennsylvania" and was going to try to get the street shut down.
 - I actually prefer alternative 2 EXCEPT the fact that Flatirons Elementary School is located in the area. Students with special needs, combined with the occasional presence of bears and mountain lions, makes it critical for fast emergency response times.
 - I support alternative 3 because it is the most comprehensive and it is the best for the nearby elementary school due to the access for emergency vehicles (which is negatively impacted by alter #2). This culvert was supposed to be replaced in 1996, but the project ran out of money. It is long overdue. Also, given that mountain lions have begun to hunt around gregory creek in town, it is a bad idea to create an ""attractive"" environment for wildlife as suggested by alter. 2. Due to the school and the number of small children, we must put public safety first and select option 3. The price is commensurate with the benefits.

- **Other options: 4 in favor**
 - Reduce parking on east side of stream. Turn that area into a gathering place for kids and parents. Allow residents to access their drives, but reduce traffic and parking.
 - I'm not advocating for any particular solution, but do have the following concern: if the capacity at Pennsylvania is increased, does that just mean that the flooding as the Creek goes under 7th will be that much worse? Or further down, as it goes under Pleasant? Or University? Or Eighth? It seems to me that having the creek top over and go sluicing down broad streets during a flood is not the worst solution -- it keeps the flood shallow enough not to drown anyone, or to cause major structural damage (just wet basements, which one can recover from.)
 - alternative 2 is probably best, but i would like a draw bridge.
 - alternative two or alternative 3 with a drawbridge.