

**Thank you for joining us for our March 11 Town Hall.
Below are answers to questions received through our resident
survey regarding specific Public Works projects and issues.**

Many have questions about the projects that the City is working on so we wanted to take this opportunity to let you know about our capital project interactive mapping tool. This tool is accessible to the public from our website and provides information on our current projects along with contact information for the manager of each project. This can be found here:

<https://maps.auburnwa.gov/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=capitalprojects>

With the new Pioneer School being built, 25th street lost off street parking between 21st and 25th Street SE...the street is now narrow with the new sidewalk and curbs. There should be no street parking at all between 21st and 25th on K street. It is dangerous for people and parked cars as 2 cars can't drive past each other at the same time.

Answer

The Auburn School District's Contractor has not yet completed all work associated with the Pioneer Elementary School replacement project. One of the outstanding items of work is to install permanent "No Parking" signs on K Street SE in the locations that parking will be restricted. We have informed the contractor of your concerns and asked that they install temporary "No Parking" signs until the permanent ones can be placed.

B St SE between 12th St SE and 17th St SE is a speeder's delight. B St se is used by many driver's to avoid a left turn from 12th St SE to south bound A St SE. What is the city's plan to curb this problem? After many years of complaining to the city of Auburn yield signs were installed on 13th St SE. This stopped many collisions at B and 13th. When the time comes and 12th St se is reconditioned and a control light is installed at 12th St SE and A St SE, B St SE will become less of a bypass street.

Answer

The City's Traffic Engineering group doesn't have any records of complaints of speeding on B Street SE between 12th Street SE and 17th Street SE. However, it makes sense that this could be used as a cut-through route. We are working on a study this year that will focus on the A Street SE corridor, including the intersection of 12th Street SE. The study will identify current and future issues and develop recommended solutions or projects. It is anticipated that the study may recommend a traffic signal at 12th Street SE, however, it is not known when this would be prioritized against other corridor needs

and how it would be funded. In the meantime, we will work with the Police Department for emphasis patrols.

Can you please come up to Lea Hill to the Sunnybrook subdivision and crack seal our City owned streets. They are cracking up and could have their life extended. We also have a sinkage area on the main entry street that is beyond crack sealing.

Answer

Please use our See Click Fix app to provide more specific information on the specific location(s) of your concerns including the street name(s) and where you believe the sink hole is. This can also be done by adding a photo to the See Click Fix request. Once we have more specific locations, the City will review them. Unfortunately, this is not specific enough for us to provide a full response.

Love the new sidewalk/curbs/ADA ramps being added in all around the city. Hate to be picky ... but ... specifically, The blacktop next to the new concrete is now smoothed out to the concrete. Will they go back and smooth out the blacktop sections? Some of the black top is already showing dips in it and you know that will definitely fail sooner then. Another question: is "I" street SE ever going to be redone? It has the worst tree root bumps of any of the streets. I know we love our trees but seriously, the trees need to be taken out, put in at least one side with proper sidewalk, extra wide on the road to allow for on street parking and put new smaller proper trees that roots don't spread in parking strip.

Answer

We are not certain of the specific location you are referring to in this question, but we think you are referring to the work along Auburn Way North/South. This project, which spans from 22nd Street NE to 4th Street SE, is not yet complete and the roadway grind and overlay will be completed in the spring of 2021. Regarding the I Street SE portion of the question, we are also assuming you are referring to the section between Main Street and 4th Street SE. This portion of the corridor is considered a full re-build and is on our radar, however, our local street preservation funds are only funded through 2022 at this time and those funds have already been committed to other specific locations. Should funding be available beyond 2022 for local street preservation, this location will be considered for a future year.

I have asked this question before, nothing much has been said and less has been done. The noise level in the neighborhoods along the south side of Hwy 18 (Les Gove) has risen substantially over the last decade. Where we could once talk to neighbors over our fences and hear lawnmowers several houses away, now we only hear freeway noise. This was made more evident during the lockdown in March and April of 2020 when things were quieter, like they had been when we moved in 15 years ago. Noise affects property values, peace of mind, safety and more. I would like to know if there are any plans to put up a sound barrier wall along Hwy 18 between Auburn Way S and the apartments just east of M St SE. I don't know for sure how others feel about the noise levels, but i do know that with the rise in freeway noise has come a rise in crime, vandalism, and general neglect. I have spent less and less time outside, I don't see or speak to my neighbors as often because to do so would require shouting. Even a conversation on my back porch is nearly impossible unless the freeway is closed or slowed for some reason. So, I am asking again, are there any plans to help those of us living along the freeway and if so, when. If not, why and what do we have to do to change your mind.

Answer

The City does not have any records of any previous concerns raised about noise along SR18. However, noise walls along the State Highway are not the responsibility of the City to construct as the City is not responsible for the management, operation or maintenance of State Route 18. The agency that is responsible is the Washington State Department of Transportation. Typically, the State would consider noise impacts when they have a project along a highway that is modifying the number of lanes or moving lanes closer to areas, such as residence, where noise can be impacted. The State has specific criteria for the types of mitigation that they would consider that can included a noise barrier wall. At this time, the City does not have any plans to construct a noise wall and does not have the authority to require anything to be done by the State as they do not have any active projects that we are aware of. Residents can let the State know of their concerns at <https://wsdot.wa.gov/contact/feedback> .

When will D St. NE between 15th St NE and 8th St NE be repaired? There are potholes all along that stretch from Jack n the box to Fred Meyer. Especially bad in front of the Fire Department an Medic One. Also, we live in Rio Verde Mobile Estates in Auburn and our water bill is very expensive. The Sewer bill is always at least twice the amount of the water bill and the Storm water bill is more than the water bill. The park takes the Storm water bill and divides it by the number of mobile homes and we have to pay for all the storm water. It doesn't seem fair that the residents have to pay for it all. They say since the residents use the clubhouse and all the other common areas that we have to pay for them also? Water bill \$21.87 Sewer bill \$46.57 Stormwater \$21.93 Rio Verde is a Senior Park can Seniors get a discount or something?

Answer

As it relates to D St NE, this roadway has been identified as a re-build and is also a collector roadway. This would be funded through our Arterial/Collector Preservation program which has limited funding and is currently committed through the end of 2024. Therefore, scheduling of the full re-build will be dependent on funding availability after 2024. City staff will continue to maintain potholes along the roadway until it can be rebuilt.

As it relates to your utility questions, Rio Verde is a mobile home park and, as such, has a single utility account with the City. The Park manager is responsible for the breakdown and distribution of the bill to the residents. In addition, the sewer bill within a mobile home park is based on the water usage so if there are any leaking lines or irrigation that is not through a separate irrigation meter, these uses of water will add to the sewer costs. The Park could propose to build a separate irrigation system or to provide a system that is individually metered to the residents. However, either of these would likely be a significant expense that would likely be borne by the residents. The City does have a senior/disability low income discount, but because the individual residents in the Park are not direct account holders with the City, they are not eligible to participate in that program. However, there is a Senior/Disability Low Income Utility Rebate program that may apply to qualifying Rio Verde residents. You can find more information on this on the City's website here: https://www.auburnwa.gov/city_hall/utilities

With the addition of sidewalks on F street, the road is very narrow now. If cars want to turn on 5th St, they need to make sure a car isn't coming the other way. What inspired the design to have the sidewalks to be so wide?

Answer

Prior to the F Street SE project, the roadway was a two lane roadway and turning traffic needed to yield to on-coming traffic in-order to turn onto 5th Street SE, this configuration has not changed with the

project. This project was designed to include bike connections for all levels of users between Main Street in downtown and the Les Gove Campus. So one side of F Street will have a wide trail intended for both pedestrians and bikes. This means that this previously 2 lane road that did not have curbs or in some locations sidewalks, will now have curbs and sidewalks and for the trail we also have a separation from the travel lane by a landscape strip that is required for the trail. The lane widths will be a standard lane width; however, the previous roadway was much wider than our standard lane widths so it may feel narrower. The improvements also provide a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross the road and be exposed to traffic which is also a safety improvement. **View F Street SE Project Maps**

Want to know if E St SW will ever be repaired properly and if the alley between E And D can get repaired. Feel like this part of town is ignored.

Answer

Regarding the alley, in 2020, due to budget impacts, some of our street work was reduced which unfortunately included some of our alley maintenance work. This work will return to normal in 2021 as we return to full staffing. This includes grading of gravel alleys and spraying gravel alleys for dust control. This particular alley was graded once in 2020 and overall is in good condition with a few potholes. Based on this question, there has been a request (R24167) placed with our maintenance staff to review the alley and make any corrections needed. The public can make these types of requests directly to the City through our See Click Fix App and on our website (<https://www.auburnwa.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=11470638&pageId=12530729>) which has the added benefit of getting us the information faster and allows us to communicate with you about what we are doing.

Regarding E St SW, this roadway has been identified as a full-rebuild (narrow road with broken concrete panels) and is on the list for potential roadways to do in the near future as funding becomes available. However, as a local street, the local street preservation program is only funded through 2022 at this time and those funds have already been committed to other specific locations. Should funding be available beyond 2022 for local street preservation, this location would be considered for a future year. The City is replacing sidewalks on E St SW near Main street as part of this year's sidewalk project that will be in construction this summer.

I've taken the opportunity to evaluate the City's water quality reports and have noted that our water supply has 13 contaminants that exceed safe levels, including arsenic, hexavalent chromium, and halo acetic acids. Most of these are carcinogens. 2. I've noted that our tap water frequently smells and stats like chlorine. I understand that our drinking water meets the "legal maximum" requirements, although legal limits do not constitute safety, but is merely a legal guideline put in place by the EPA and state legislature. Exposure to these chemicals at levels below the "legal maximum" levels can still cause cancer, reproductive harm, disruption of hormones, and numerous other health problems. The only way to remove arsenic is with a very expensive osmotic filter, something that many of auburn's residents cannot afford, but something that can and has been done at numerous municipal water treatment plants throughout the US. What capital projects are the city working on to eliminate contaminants from our drinking water?

Answer

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns about the City of Auburn's water supply. The City of Auburn strives to provide superior water quality, keep water rates affordable for our customers, and takes great pride in delivering quality water to our customers.

While there are some trace amounts of arsenic, halo acetic acids (HAA), and hexavalent chromium in our system, all are below the levels established by the EPA and Washington State Department of Health where treatment is required. The treatment methods available to remove some of these trace amounts are also very expensive to operate, and providing a level of treatment beyond what is required by the regulatory agencies who are responsible for setting the standards to address public health concerns will result in water rates to our customers that would be financially burdensome. We have a responsibility to provide our water at rates that our customers can afford while meeting the required water quality standards.

We do know that there are trace amounts of arsenic that are naturally occurring in some of our water sources, so to address this, we blend those with other sources that don't have arsenic to further reduce the trace amounts in the water we provide. Because we are below the required levels, we are not mandated by Department of Health to treat or remove this very small amount.

Regarding halo acetic acids (HAA), these are disinfection byproducts and are present in very small amounts. However, the public health risks associated with not disinfecting our systems are much greater than the potential risks of a small amount of HAA.

As it relates to hexavalent chromium, this was tested as part of the EPA's Unregulated Contaminated Monitoring Rule round 3 (UCMR3) in 2014 and 2015. EPA uses UCMR results to determine where and at what levels contaminants are found in drinking water throughout the country, and then goes through the process to set standards and implement rules. At this time, the EPA has not set a standard for hexavalent chromium.

However, while we may not treat specifically for the trace contaminants you mention, the City's maintenance program does include several methods to treat our water to make it both safe to drink and enjoyable to drink. First, we treat the water by adjusting the pH levels so the water is non-corrosive. This helps protect the public from elevated levels of lead and copper. We also perform unidirectional flushing on a rotating basis throughout the City. This serves multiple purposes: 1) It removes sediment from the water main that has settled over time and can contribute to the degradation of water quality, 2) It is an economical way to remove tubercles that can decrease the capacity for the main to deliver fire flows, and 3) It helps to maintain a balanced chlorine residual. Auburn maintains a chlorine residual of between 0.3 and 0.8 parts per million (ppm) in our distribution system with an average of 0.59 ppm. The maximum residual disinfection level (MRDL) is 4.0 ppm.

Without knowing your exact location within our system, we cannot evaluate why you might be smelling chlorine in your water. However, contrary to popular belief, chlorine taste in the water is usually due to not enough chlorine in the water. This typically is noticed by customers who live on dead end water mains where there is not enough usage to replace the water in that main often enough. To minimize this in our system, we have one of our crews dedicated to flushing these dead-end mains throughout the City on a regular basis. If you would like to discuss your specific location further, please contact us through See Click Fix or by calling 253.941.3048.