

**Item 6.1:                        Dry Creek Greenway East Trail Project – Final  
   Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Project Approval**

**Staff**                                Michael Dour, Alternative Transportation Manager

**Summary Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Transportation Commission:

1. Recommend that the City Council certify the Dry Creek Greenway East Trail EIR;
2. Recommend that the City Council approve the Dry Creek Greenway East Trail Project with the use of Alignment Options 1B for the Hillcrest area and 5A for the Sunrise Avenue area.

**Staff Report Contents**

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Please see the staff report from May 21, 2018 Transportation Commission meeting (Attachment 1) for a detailed overview of the extensive public participation opportunities provided for the project, including for the Draft EIR direct mailing to all property owners within 300' of the project. For this Transportation Commission meeting, we notified the public in the following ways:

- Dry Creek Greenway East Project Updates email and text message to subscribers
- Trail Alert email and text message to subscribers
- Website
- Social media

**Meeting Purpose and Role of the Transportation Commission**

The City of Roseville is required as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to prepare, review and certify or adopt an environmental document for capital improvement projects. For the Dry Creek Greenway East, the City has taken the following actions for CEQA compliance:

- Prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and held a public scoping meeting to determine the content and scope of the environmental document;
- Prepared and distributed a Draft EIR for a 45-day public review period that ended Tuesday May 29, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.
- On May 21, 2018, the Transportation Commission held a noticed public meeting to accept public comments on the Draft EIR.

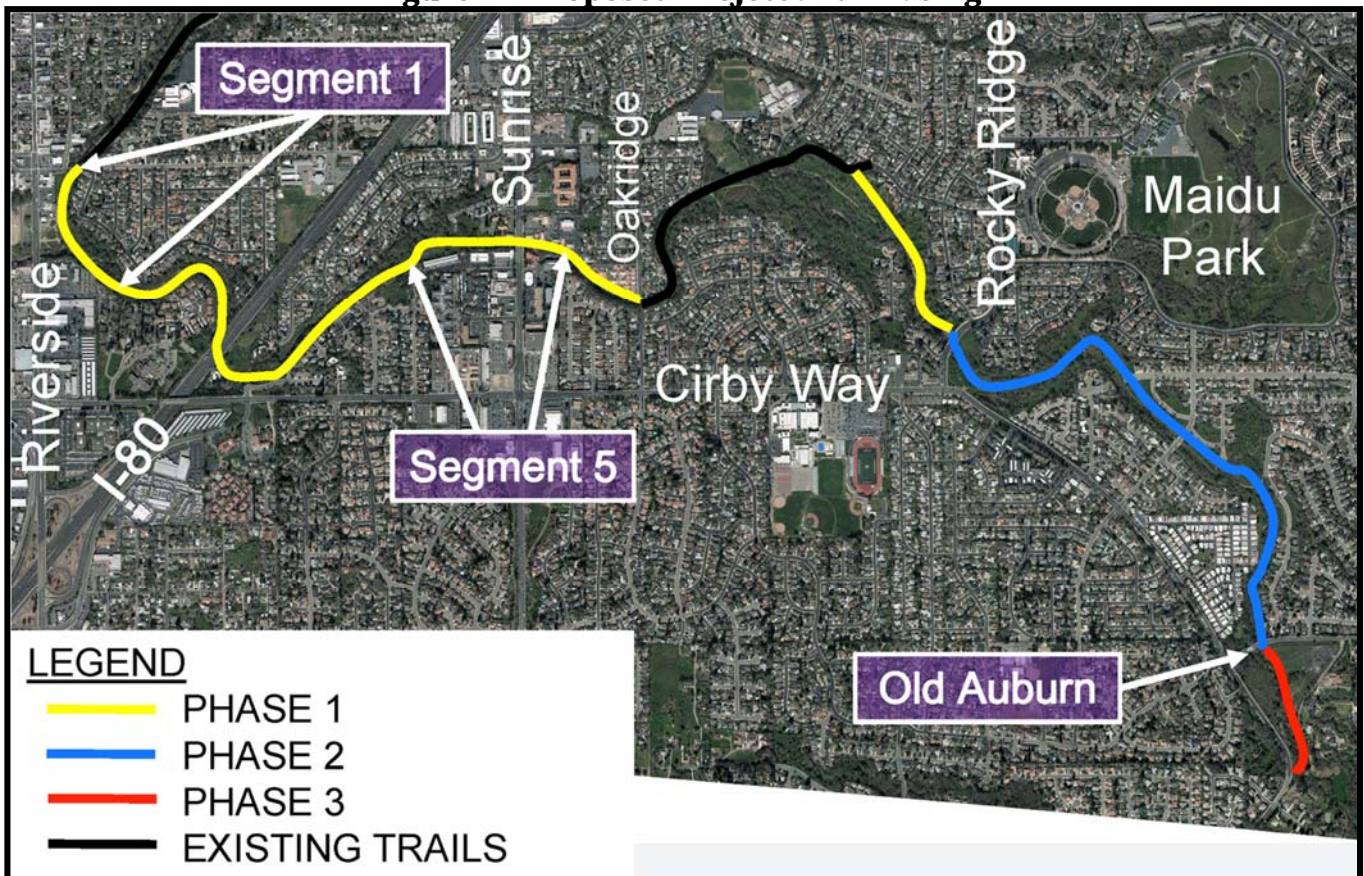
Ascent Environmental, in consultation with city staff, has now prepared a Final EIR for the Dry Creek Greenway Project. This document includes written responses to each written and verbal comment received on the Draft EIR. The responses clarify, amplify, and/or correct information presented in the Draft EIR, as appropriate. These changes do not alter the environmental impact or significance conclusions of the Draft EIR.

As the advisory body to the City Council on transportation projects, the Transportation Commission is now tasked with considering the information provided in the Draft and Final EIRs and making a recommendation on the Final EIR and the Proposed Project to the City Council. This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration when taking an action on certification of the EIR and project approval.

### Project Overview

The Dry Creek Greenway East Trail Project is a proposed paved trail along Dry, Cirby & Linda Creeks from Darling Way/Riverside Avenue to the City limits at S. Cirby Way/Old Auburn Road (see Figure 1). The project is identified as a proposed Class I bikeway in the City of Roseville General Plan. The project is also identified as a priority project in the Bicycle Master Plan (adopted in 1994 and most recently updated in 2008) because: 1) It would provide a safe, comfortable, convenient and highly connected bike route in an area of the City that is otherwise underserved by bicycle facilities; 2) it would connect schools and businesses to residential neighborhoods, and; 3) it provides regional connections as part of a planned loop trail around the greater South Placer/ Sacramento area. Figure 1 also shows proposed phasing for the project. The phasing plan was developed in consideration of available funding and connectivity to existing and future bikeway projects. Additional phasing information is provided on pages 9-11.

**Figure 1 – Proposed Project and Phasing**



**Project Description including Alignment Options:** Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR includes a detailed description and maps of the proposed project and alignment options for Segments 1 and Segment 5.

For Segment 1 (Hillcrest area near Riverside Avenue), the alignment options are identified as options 1A, 1B, & 1C. For Segment 5 (Sunrise Avenue Area), the alignment options are identified as option 5A & 5B.

The Draft EIR includes a project-level CEQA analysis for all of the alignment options. This approach was used because a preferred alignment for Segments 1 and 5 was not selected by the City Council during review of the prior feasibility study. Providing a project-level review of the Segment 1 and 5 options is intended to allow the City Council to choose from among the options.

It should be noted that the EIR identifies a proposed project that includes Alignment Options 1B & 5B. Identifying options 1B & 5B as part of the “proposed project” was done in order to provide a stable project description for analysis, in compliance with CEQA regulations, but was not intended to preclude the City from choosing from among the alignment options. The alignment option recommendations contained later in this report are based upon the EIR Analysis summarized in Table 6-1 of the Draft EIR, and the detailed analysis of the physical, social and economic considerations of each of the alignment options provided on pages 7-8 of this report.

### **Summary of Draft EIR**

Section 4 of the Draft EIR includes a detailed analysis of the above-noted resource topics. The analysis was prepared by resource area experts at Ascent Environmental and is supported by technical studies related to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions modeling, biological and cultural resource record searches, field studies and fluvial (hydrologic) modeling. For the proposed project and the Segment 1 and Segment 5 options, the Draft EIR analysis finds that there are ***no impacts*** or ***less-than-significant impacts*** to the following resources areas:

- Aesthetics
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Utilities

For the proposed project and the Segment 1 and Segment 5 options, the Draft EIR analysis also finds that there is a potentially significant impact to the following resource areas, but that the impacts for these resource areas would be reduced to a ***less-than-significant level with mitigation***:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Transportation and Circulation

Table 2-1 includes a list of all of the proposed mitigation measures. The Draft EIR finds that, even with implementation of the feasible mitigation measures, there would be a ***significant unavoidable short-term construction-related noise impact*** for the proposed project under all of the alignment options. For the Segment 5 options, the Draft EIR finds that, even with implementation of the feasible mitigation measures, there would be a significant unavoidable short-term construction-generated ground vibration impact for Alignment Option 5A.

### **Summary of Final EIR**

The City received 22 written comments and 6 verbal comments during the 45-day review period for the Draft EIR. The Final EIR is prepared pursuant to CEQA to document and respond to all comments received during the public comment period. The contents of the Final EIR include:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction and List of Commenters
- Chapter 2 - Comments and Responses
- Chapter 3 – Revisions to the Draft EIR
- Chapter 4 – Mitigation Monitoring Plan
- Chapter 5 – References

The 28 commenters provided comments on a range of topics. The topics included parking and traffic, flooding and erosion, biological resources (including oak trees), visual quality, and noise. The Final EIR responses clarify, amplify, and/or correct information presented in the Draft EIR, as appropriate. However, the comments and responses to comments did not alter any of the environmental impact or significance conclusions of the Draft EIR.

Taken together, the Final EIR, the Draft EIR, and the Appendices constitute the full EIR for the proposed project. The full EIR is to be considered by the Transportation Commission and City Council during project review, including the selection of the alignment options.

Some of the 28 commenters also provided comments on topics that are outside the scope of CEQA review since they address social or economic considerations instead of potential physical changes to the environment. Although these are not addressed through the CEQA process, this staff report provides information on these issues as follows:

**Safety & Security** – Master Response 1 on page 2-1 of the Final EIR addresses this topic. Fire Department representatives further note that the City of Roseville is not located in a Cal Fire-designated high hazard area. Even so, there is a risk of human-caused fires in open space areas whether or not a trail is present, since all open space areas in Roseville experience some level of human activity. The City has a proactive weed abatement program that reduces the risks associated with fires in our open space. Trails increase human presence in open space areas, but the presence of trail users may actually discourage some illegal activities in the open space and also allows citizens to report suspicious behavior. The Fire Department has not identified a trend for fires in open space areas that have trails. The Fire Department also notes that the presence of paved trails in the open space is an important tool that allows first responders to better respond to calls for emergency service, including fires. Where there are not trails in the open space, responding to wildland fire calls is extremely challenging.

The Roseville Police Department is responsible for public safety in the open space and along Roseville's trails. The Police Department's Social Services Unit has an officer designated for patrolling the City's parks, open space and trails. The trails are patrolled on an as needed basis.

Roseville is a relatively safe and secure community. The Police Department indicates that there is not a trend in crime along our trails. With that said, crime can and does occasionally happen along our trails, just as crime occurs elsewhere in our community. This is consistent with findings in other communities where crime along trails is reflective of the general safety and security of the area through which they travel.

The Police Department has observed that transients are currently active in the open space areas along the length of the project area, even without the presence of a trail. Currently, when the Police Department receives a call for service in the open space along the project area, they have limited options for accessing the open space, and they must often leave their car and walk the open space on foot. This increases the time it takes to respond to a citizen request and reduces the ability to address open space use issues. The Police Department believes that installation of this trail will increase human activity in the

open space, but the vast majority of the new users will be law abiding citizens. As with fire safety, the presence of trail users may actually discourage some illegal activities in the open space and also allows citizens to report suspicious behavior. The trail will also allow the Police Department to better patrol the open space and respond to calls for service.

**Potential for Trail User Conflicts** – Comment 19-1 and 22-1 (pp. 2-143 and 2-166 of the Final EIR) state concerns with trail width and the potential for injuries resulting from collisions between pedestrians and fast-moving bicyclists between Oakridge Drive and Rocky Ridge Road. Comment 19-1 indicates that the existing paved and dirt trails in the Sierra Gardens area near Eich Middle School are used by families with young children as well as older and physically challenged residents in the area. The concern is that lengthening the trail could result in additional bicyclist use of the paved trail, and this could result in higher potential for conflicts with pedestrians resulting in injuries. The commenter also requests that the project include informational trail signs to identify historic uses of the area (such as Native American activities in the area, or cattle drives.) Comment 22-1 requests that pedestrian paths be provided separate from the paved bike path.

The trail user conflict concern was posed during preliminary planning for the trail. The City responded (prior to preparation of the Draft EIR) by: 1) adjusting the trail alignment between Oakridge Drive and Rocky Ridge Road to avoid paving one existing dirt path and, 2) by proposing where feasible a modified trail design that incorporates a wider decomposed granite shoulder on one side of the pavement to provide more room for pedestrians. Due to limitations in available right-of-way along the length of the trail, we are not able to modify the trail design in most other areas.

**Adjacency of trail near Spahn Ranch Subdivision** – The Spahn Ranch Subdivision is a new subdivision that is located east of Old Auburn Road and north of Dry Creek. The subdivision was proposed and designed after the City Council accepted the 2010 Dry Creek Greenway Trail Planning and Feasibility Study. During the subdivision design process, the City worked with the subdivision design engineer to ensure that adequate open space was maintained to accommodate the future trail. Although the plans for the trail were made known to the home builder, the Draft EIR was the first time some of the new Spahn Ranch homeowners heard about the trail, and we received quite a few comments with concerns about this segment of trail (Phase 3).

As identified in the project phasing section of this report, Phase 2 of the trail would include an undercrossing of Old Auburn Road to allow for a connection to the east (northbound) side of Old Auburn Road. Phase 2 also includes a connection to Brightside Lane of the Spahn Ranch Subdivision. Phase 3 of the trail would extend the trail from Brightside Lane along the south edge of the Spahn Ranch Subdivision and north bank of Linda Creek to the city limits.

The 2010 Dry Creek Greenway Trail Planning and Feasibility Study proposes that, south of Old Auburn Road, the trail be located on the east side of Linda Creek. The two primary reasons for this are: 1) There are physical constraints to locating the trail on the west side of Linda Creek, including a location about 900 feet east of the South Cirby Way/Old Auburn Road intersection where Old Auburn Road directly abuts Linda Creek and there is no room for trail construction; and 2) as the trail reaches the City limits and enters unincorporated Placer County, the County's Bikeway Master Plan shows the trail heading east toward Sierra College Boulevard along Linda Creek.

Placer County is currently updating its Parks and Trails Master Plan. The current draft shows two alternatives for the extension of the trail: 1) Along Linda Creek per the Placer County Bikeway Master Plan; and 2) from Linda Creek and then along Old Auburn Road directly to Sierra College Boulevard. The City's understanding is that the County will have to conduct additional feasibility analysis to select a

trail alignment for the segment of trail within unincorporated Placer County. As a result, there is a possibility that the County may choose an alternate alignment. For that reason, City staff recommends that design and construction of Phase 3 not proceed until Placer County further develops its plans for the trail alignment.

Spahn Ranch Area Map



**Potential for Decreased Property Values** – Comment 20-3 (Final EIR p. 2-153) raised a concern about effect on homeowner property values in the Spahn Ranch area. Several studies have been conducted to evaluate the effect of trails on property values. The studies suggest that trails are likely to increase property values within a neighborhood, and that some trails may act as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. For example, a 1994 study by the Maryland Greenways Commission titled *Analysis of the Economic Impacts of the Northern Central Rail Trail* asked residents near the trail corridor whether they thought value would be added to homes within walking distance of the trail. Sixty-two percent (62%) believed that a trail would add value, 7% believed that a trail would decrease home value, and 31% believed it would have no effect.

The study of Seattle’s Burke-Gilman trail also attempted to evaluate the effect of the trail on property values. That study did not conclusively determine if the trail had any affect, negatively or positively, on property values. However, that study did turn up some anecdotal information:

- Trails are often considered amenities when selling real estate
- Homes are regularly advertised as being near or on the trail
- Residents who bought their homes after the trail was opened are most likely to view the trail as a positive factor that increases the value of their home

- Long-time residents who bought their homes prior to the opening of the trail are generally less likely to view the trail as an economic asset

These views are supported by a 2013 study by the National Association of Realtors and National Association of Home Builders. That study found that walking and jogging trails were identified by 60% of recent homebuyers as the most desirable community feature that would seriously influence the decision to purchase a home.

The studies are less conclusive about the effect of trails on the property value of homes that directly abut the trail corridor. Some studies suggest that the presence of a trail may result in a loss of property value, while others suggest that an adjoining trail would increase in property value. Factors that may influence a particular result include good trail design in context with the neighborhood surroundings. As noted above, the Spahn Ranch subdivision was designed in consideration of the proposed trail, but a final alignment for the trail has not yet been selected.

Other communities and organizations have studied the community-wide economic impact of trails. These studies find that many trails result in economic benefits from increased tourism. The Dry Creek Greenway Trail is part of a future 70 to 80 mile loop trail around the South Placer/Sacramento region that will be a trail of regional and potentially national significance, with corresponding potential for economic benefits.

### **Analysis of Alignment Options**

In 2010, the City Council selected a preferred trail alignment for a majority of the Dry Creek Greenway East trail project. However, the City Council did not select a preferred alignment for the Hillcrest (Riverside Avenue) and Sunrise Avenue areas. As noted above, the EIR includes project-level CEQA analysis for multiple alignment options as follows:

- Segment 1 (Hillcrest) area alignment options: 1A, 1B, and 1C.
- Segment 5 (Sunrise) area alignment options: 5A and 5B.

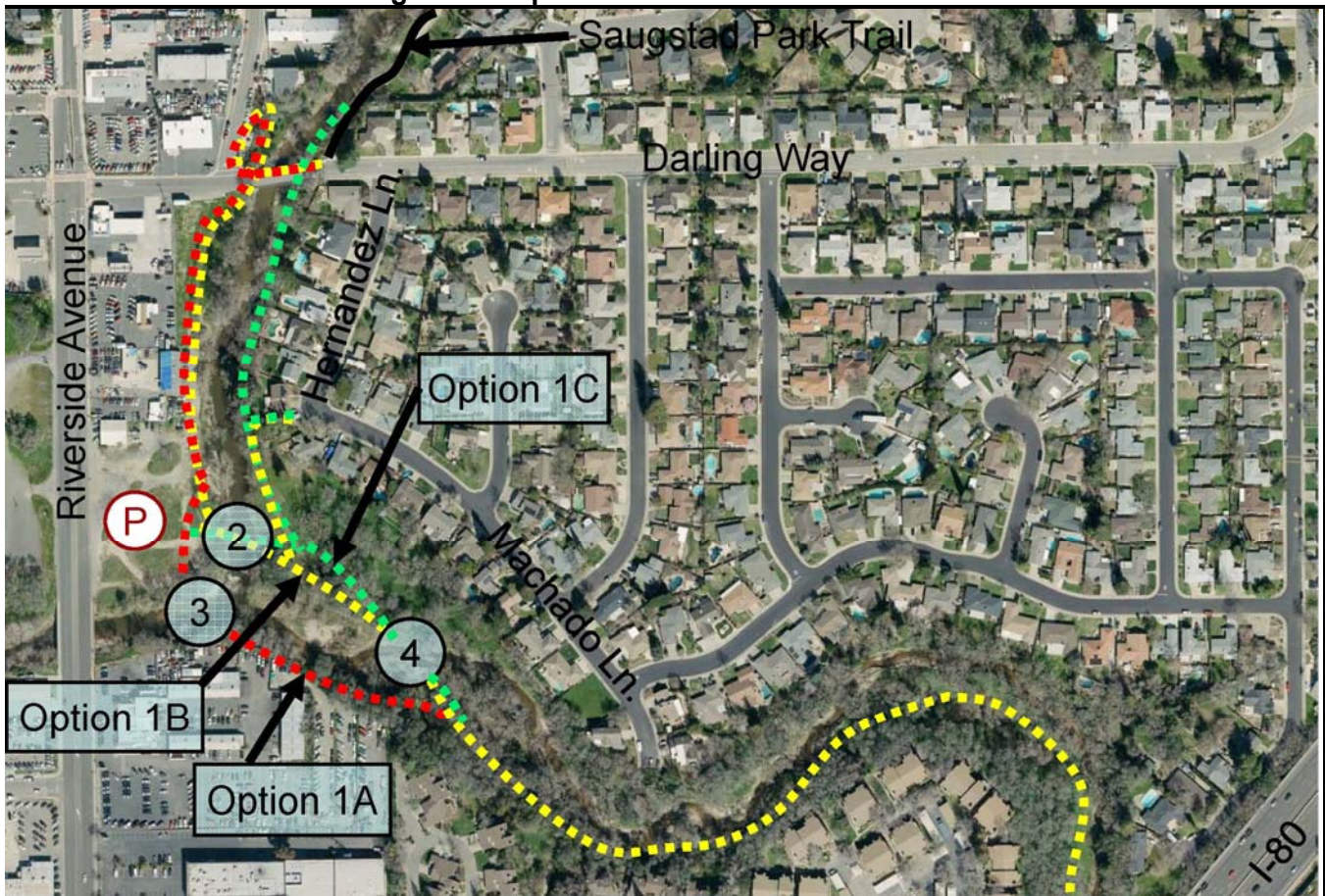
Draft EIR Table 6-1 shows that the environmental impacts of all alignment options are generally the same. There are some minor variations in the level of impact as identified through use of the terms greater than, less than or equal to in Table 6-1. However, since the impacts are generally the same for each alignment option, the staff recommendation provided below focuses primarily on the other physical, social and economic considerations for each alignment option.

**Analysis of Segment 1 Alignment Options (Hillcrest/Riverside Area)** - The following key considerations inform the staff recommendation for the Segment 1 Hillcrest Area:

- Limited space, existing property line fences, steep banks along the creek, and the location of sewer main and manholes present significant challenges to Option 1C.
- Options 1A & 1B require two bridge crossings (Bridge #2 across Dry Creek and Bridge #4 across Cirby Creek), while Option 1C requires one bridge crossing (Bridge #3 across Dry Creek).
- Option 1C requires challenging construction including the installation of a large retaining walls along the south side of Dry and Cirby Creeks(walls 35, 36 and 37 as shown on Exhibit 3-13 of the Draft EIR), resulting in overall greater cost.
- Options 1A reduces access options for the Hillcrest neighborhood since access to Hernandez/Machado is not provided. However this connection can be provided under the proposed trail alignment and Option 1C.

In consideration of the above, **staff recommends that the City select Option 1B as the recommended trail alignment** in the Hillcrest Area. This is primarily due to the improved constructability of Option 1B combined with the access that it provides.

### Segment 1 Options – Hillcrest/Riverside Area



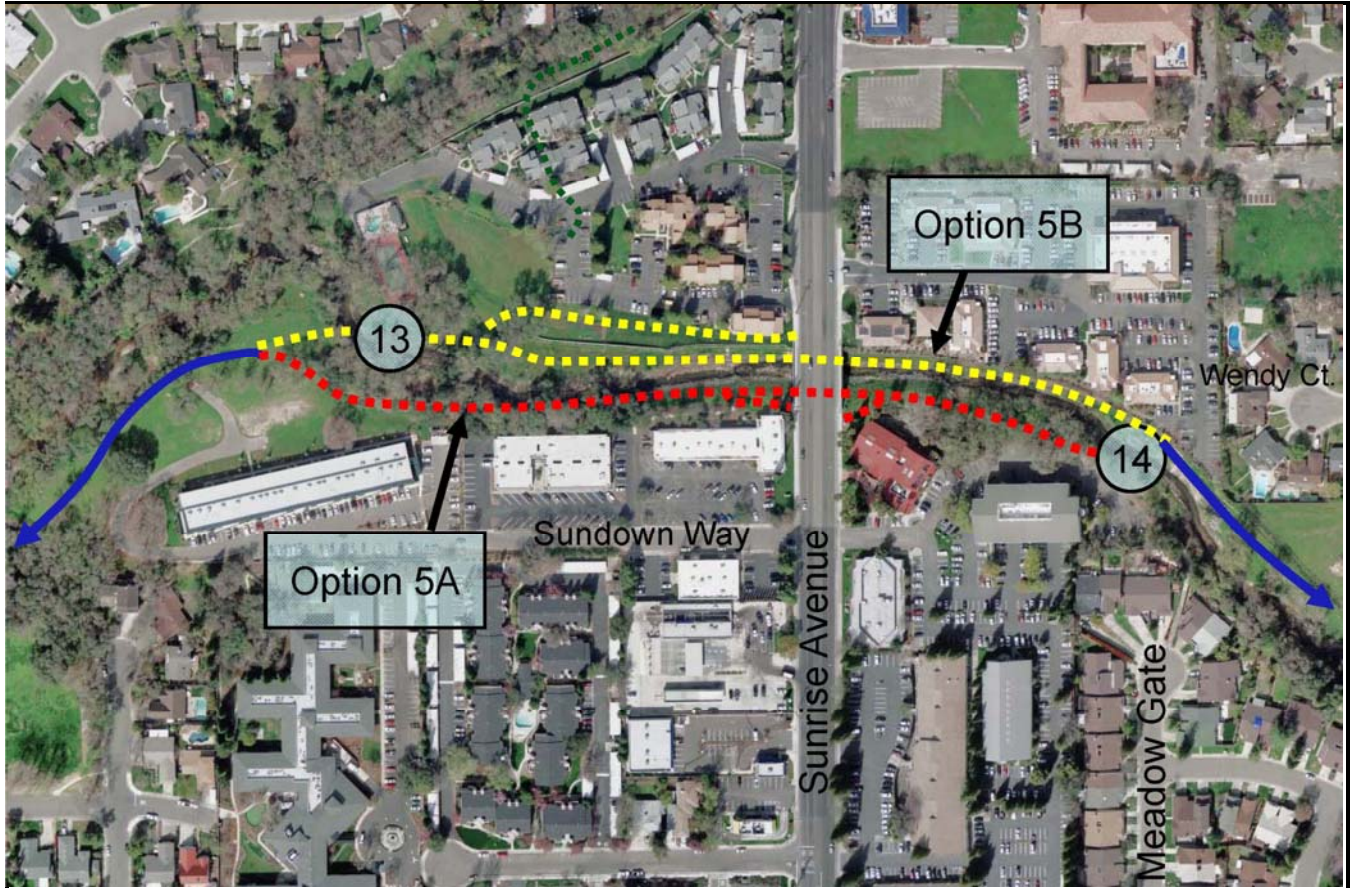
**Analysis of Segment 5 Alignment Options (Sunrise Avenue Area)** - The following key considerations inform the staff recommendation for the Segment 5 Sunrise Area:

- Option 5A and 5B both result in significant and unavoidable short-term temporary construction noise impacts. However, Option 5A may also expose residents of nearby homes on Meadow Gate Drive to significant ground vibration associated with the construction of bridge #14.
- Option 5A provides direct and convenient access to the west and east sides of Sunrise Avenue.
- Option 5A requires less right-of-way acquisition, but requires additional structural features including Bridge #14 that results in a cost differential of \$1,100,000 (compared to Option 5B).
- Option 5B does not provide access to the east side of Sunrise Avenue, and access to the west side of Sunrise Avenue is not convenient as it begins over 500' from Sunrise Avenue. The limited access to Sunrise Avenue is a concern because there are no safe and convenient options for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross Sunrise Avenue.
- Bridge 13 of Option 5B is proposed as a low-flow bridge across Linda Creek (similar to the bridges on Miners Ravine) because the regulatory floodway is very wide at the confluence of



Cirby and Linda Creeks. This is expected to result in permitting challenges with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board since a variance would be required.

### Segment 5 Options – Sunrise Area



In consideration of the above, **staff recommends that the City select Option 5A as the recommended trail alignment** in the Sunrise Area. This is primarily due to the enhanced trail access and the relative balancing of other considerations, and because we anticipate that we will be able to obtain sufficient grant funds for the project.

### Proposed Phasing and Cost Estimates

Staff currently proposes construction of the project in 3 phases as described below. We have developed cost estimates for each phase. The cost estimates for design, permitting and right-of-way are estimates based upon our experience with similar projects. The construction cost estimates are based upon recent bid openings for other similar projects. Recent projects have been expensive due to the current high demand for contractors and high materials costs, and this is factored into the cost estimates. We anticipate that the project costs will be paid for using a variety of federal and state grants, and local transportation funds. General fund money, including the recently-approved Measure B funds, will not be used for this project.

**Phase 1: Riverside/Darling to Rocky Ridge** - This phase is approximately 2 miles long and includes the following improvements:

- Connection to existing Saugstad Park Trail at Darling Way
- Widening and undercrossing of Darling Way
- One bridge crossing of Dry Creek and potentially 1 bridge crossing of Cirby Creek (depending on selected alignment option)
- Undercrossing of I-80
- Connection to Eastwood Park
- Undercrossing of and connection to Sunrise Avenue
- 1 bridge crossing of Linda Creek (location dependent on selected alignment option)
- At-grade crossing of Oakridge Drive to connection with existing Sierra Gardens Trail
- At-grade connection to west side of Rocky Ridge Drive

The estimated cost for Phase 1 is \$15,900,000 as follows:

• Final Design	\$1,000,000
• Environmental Permits	\$700,000
• Right-of-way Acquisition	\$1,200,000
• Construction	\$11,500,000
• Construction Engineering & Management	\$1,500,000

Staff has identified local funds for design, permitting and right-of-way acquisition. Staff has also identified \$5,000,000 in federal grant funding for Phase 1 construction. If the project is approved, staff will explore additional options for funding the balance of the construction costs.

The above cost estimate is based upon the recommended alignment. As noted above, the project includes several alignment options within Phase 1 that have varying costs as follows:

- Option 1A would increase the cost of construction by \$200,000.
- Option 1C would decrease the cost of construction by \$100,000
- Option 5B would decrease the cost of construction by \$1,100,000

**Phase 2: Rocky Ridge to Old Auburn Way-** This phase is approximately 1.5 miles long and includes the following improvements:

- Undercrossing of and connection to existing path along Rocky Ridge Drive
- 1 Bridge crossing of Linda Creek
- Replacement or retrofit of the existing bridge over Strap Ravine
- Undercrossing of Old Auburn Road
- Trail connection to the west and east sides of Old Auburn Road

The estimated cost for Phase 2 is \$5,000,000 as follows:

• Final Design	\$400,000
• Environmental Permits	\$200,000
• Right-of-way Acquisition	\$300,000
• Construction	\$3,600,000
• Construction Engineering & Management	\$500,000

Staff has not yet identified funding for Phase 2, but expects that it would be eligible for transportation-related grants such as the California Active Transportation Program.

**Phase 3: Old Auburn Way to City Limits** - This phase is approximately 0.5 miles long and includes the following improvements:

- Trail improvements along north side of Linda Creek adjacent to the Spahn Ranch subdivision
- Up to 2 bridge crossings of Linda Creek

The estimated cost for Phase 2 is \$2,000,000 as follows:

• Final Design	\$200,000
• Environmental Permits	\$100,000
• Right-of-way Acquisition	N/A
• Construction	\$1,500,000
• Construction Engineering & Management	\$200,000

Staff has not yet identified funding for Phase 3, but also expects this phase to be eligible for grant funding. As noted above, staff recommends that design and construction of Phase 3 not proceed until Placer County further develops its plans for the trail alignment.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Transportation Commission:

1. Accept the staff report
2. Ask clarifying questions
3. Accept public comment
4. Discuss the project
5. Recommend that the City Council certify the Dry Creek Greenway East Trail Final EIR;
6. Recommend that the City Council approve the Dry Creek Greenway East Trail Project with the use of Alignment Option 1B for the Hillcrest area and Alignment Option 5A for the Sunrise Avenue area.

The Transportation Commission recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for their review and action. A date has not yet been set for the future City Council meeting. Persons interested in receiving notification of the follow-up meetings should submit their contact information to the Alternative Transportation offices at [transportation@roseville.ca.us](mailto:transportation@roseville.ca.us).

If the City Council accepts the project and directs staff to move forward, the next steps would include:

- Final Design
- Environmental Permitting
- Right-of-way Acquisition
- Obtain Grant Funding
- Phased Trail Construction

If the project is approved by the City Council, phased trail construction could begin as early as 2021.

### **Attachments**

1. Final EIR
2. Draft EIR
3. May 21, 2018 Transportation Commission Staff Report