

# Letter Response to Cycling Community Comments:

Our project team would like to sincerely thank those members of the Cycling Community who have reached out to provide their thoughts and suggestions on the planned closure of Emigration Canyon.

First of all, please understand that this decision was not taken lightly. Many options were discussed, but the final decision came down to one of safety. As many of you know, the canyon is very narrow. When the contractor closes one lane for work and establishes a safe work zone, the remaining lane, which will require flagging, in most locations may be less than 11 feet wide including any shoulder. That is too narrow to safely support a bicycle and a vehicle. On evenings and weekends there will very likely be open milled surfaces with a 2+ inch drop from the roadway surface. Vehicles have very little problem navigating those conditions. For cyclists it would be very dangerous.

There are a few other things you need to know about the project that will help with understanding our decision:

- First of all, the pavement in the canyon is in terrible condition. We have estimated significant areas that require what we call soft spot repair (places where the pavement and sub-material must be completely removed and re-installed, essentially reconstructing sections of the shoulder or roadway, which takes significantly more time).
- Second, there are several areas where the contractor will be adjusting the profile (slope) of the road in order to improve drainage,
- Finally, crews will be replacing a 24-inch storm drain pipe that will cut across the entire roadway at one location.

The contractor is allowed to have two work zones (up to two miles each) active at any given time so they can replace the pipe or get out ahead of the soft spot repair while they remove and replace the asphalt in another area. We gave the contractor this latitude in an attempt to get the project completed as quickly as possible.

**Asphalt paving requires temperatures of 65 degrees and rising, so putting the project off until late-fall or winter is not an option.** This project entails about 90-days of asphalt work, so construction must take place during the summer – particularly in a canyon where temperatures tend to cool more quickly.

The project will be constructed in segments so there may be the possibility of keeping some of the canyon open to cyclists, but it needs to be segmented in a way that makes sense for all parties. We need to take all factors into consideration when looking at the segments. There is no parking available in the canyon to allow segments that start and end within the canyon. We also need to give the contractor flexibility in doing the work so that everything can be completed this year. However, we may be able to consider the following:

- Keep the East end open for cycling (from SR-65 to the turnoff to Pinecrest/Killyon's Canyon) while crews work on the West end (mouth of the canyon to the turnoff to Pinecrest/Killyon's Canyon). When the West section is complete, we could open it for cycling while they complete the work on the East end. The order of work could also be reversed.

*This option is being discussed between the Mayor and the contractor.*

We know that the loss of the opportunity to use this extremely popular cycling route for the summer is a huge inconvenience, but also know that once it is complete it will be a safe and more comfortable ride on the new pavement for many years to come.

Sincerely,

*The Emigration Canyon Rehabilitation Team*