

TO: Mayor Balducci and City Councilmembers

FROM: Dave Berg, Director – Transportation Department

DATE: June 1, 2015

SUBJECT: Wilburton Traffic Impacts

As requested by Council on May 18, 2015, staff has further explored the implications of opening the NE 4th Street Extension ahead of the opening of the 120th Avenue NE Stage 2 project. The NE 4th Street Extension is anticipated to be completed in Fall of this year, about one year ahead of the completion of 120th Avenue NE Stage 2.

A modeling effort recently completed by staff indicated that during the one-year time period that NE 4th Street is open to traffic between 116th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE, but 120th Avenue NE is not completed through the NE 8th Street intersection:

- 1) 124th Avenue NE between NE 5th Street and NE 8th Street will experience a slight decrease in traffic during the PM peak hour (a decrease of 40 vehicles northbound and 50 vehicles southbound); and,
- 2) NE 5th Street between 120th Avenue NE and 124th Avenue NE will experience a minor increase in traffic (an increase of 10 vehicles westbound and 30 vehicles eastbound).

We believe the decrease in traffic on 124th Avenue NE is due to the availability of a more convenient route via NE 8th Street between 120th and 124th than using NE 5th Street and 124th south of NE 8th Street. The intersection of NE 8th Street and 120th Avenue NE has been set up to handle this routing of traffic to the extent possible, including installation of the SCATS traffic adaptive signal system and a north to east right turn lane and overlap that will display a right turn green arrow when the west to south left turn arrow is on for increased efficiency.

The modeling recently completed by staff also indicated that the slight traffic increase on NE 5th Street and the decrease on 124th Ave NE will be maintained once both the NE 4th Street Extension and 120th Avenue NE Stage 2 projects are open to traffic. We believe this is also due to the availability of a new and more convenient route system in the east-west and north-south directions in that area. The SCATS system along both the NE 8th Street and 120th Avenue NE corridors will be recalibrated at that time for the new traffic patterns.

Based on this analysis and commitments to existing businesses along both NE 4th Street and 120th Avenue NE, we recommend that the NE 4th Street Extension be allowed to open the estimated one year ahead of 120th Avenue NE Stage 2, as currently planned.

Additional Background:

Council added the 120th Stage 2 project to the 2011-2017 CIP at the request of the Wilburton community to alleviate the concern that the NE 4th project would bring additional traffic into the Wilburton area, and that without 120th Stage 2, traffic would back-up at NE 8th Street and divert through the Wilburton neighborhoods.

Since that time, staff and the Wilburton community have collaborated to identify, design and construct two significant neighborhood protection projects. The first was installed on NE 5th street just east of 120th Avenue NE and consists of a one lane road controlled on both ends by stop signs. The second, and currently under construction, is on 124th Avenue NE from NE 8th Street to Main street and includes neighborhood entry treatments, planted medians, and pedestrian crossings.