Mayor's Statement on Canyon Road Rebuild Decision, November 18, 2025

The city has spent considerable time studying how to rebuild and improve Canyon Road following the installation of a new 10-million-gallon water tank and a 42-inch transmission line. This major water infrastructure project—driven by state requirements and our 2025 Drinking Water Master Plan—will support long-term community water needs throughout the city. Construction of the tank and parts of the water line is already underway, and tree removal on Canyon Road has begun so trenching can start in spring 2026.

As we considered how to rebuild the roadway afterward, we gathered extensive public feedback—through individual comments, a citywide survey, neighborhood plans, and our new General Plan, which emphasizes connected trails as a top community priority. Other guiding documents include the Wilson Neighborhood Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. We've also worked closely with staff and design experts.

While some residents oppose changes on Canyon Road, many others are supportive. As an example, I received the following email from a resident following our public meeting this fall:

"I have been in favor of the project from the beginning and now even more so. I also want to thank you for taking the hard steps to greatly improve the island area. I have lived on XXXX Street for 42 years. One of my greatest concerns has been no sidewalk and speed on Canyon Rd. My kids were never allowed off our little street because of it. I have either run or walked on Canyon Rd or the trail behind my house nearly every day during that time."

Parents in the area have repeatedly told us their children haven't been able to safely walk or bike along the corridor for decades. This project creates a rare opportunity: the city already owns the needed right-of-way, allowing us to build pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that will serve the next 50–100 years.

Some survey respondents questioned why "no sidewalk or trail" wasn't an option; that was intentional. City code requires a pedestrian facility, and the survey focused on design elements that could be adapted. Regardless of the final layout, the ash trees and others along the corridor must be removed for the water line installation.

Based on community input, we have made several compromises. Even though Canyon Road is designated in the Transportation Master Plan as an 80-foot-wide right of way, three-lane collector road; we are **reducing it to a 66-foot right of way, two-lane configuration** to address neighborhood concerns about traffic speed and volume. This design—curb and gutter, defined striping, and pedestrian facilities—will help calm traffic. The pavement will be retained at its same approximate width.

Survey results showed the top priorities are trees, trail connectivity through a shared-use path, traffic calming, and pedestrian safety. Because trees ranked highest, the city is committing to planting larger-caliper trees that will grow quickly. Without a park strip and pedestrian facility on the north side, new trees could not be planted there. We also plan to reduce planned parking at the park based on survey feedback. After construction, any unused right-of-way is planned to be deeded back to adjacent property owners.

After weighing all viewpoints, planning documents, technical requirements, and staff recommendations, and coordinating with the Wilson Neighborhood Council, I am proposing that the city build an 8-foot-wide shared-use path along the north side of Canyon Road from Herm's Inn to the Dugway. This will include curb and gutter and a park strip with large trees. Shared-use paths are part of the city's trail system and will be maintained year-round by the parks department, including snow removal. In a few tight areas the width may narrow, but the path will remain ADA accessible.

Canyon Road is uniquely positioned to connect existing and future trail networks, offering a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists, direct access to Logan Canyon, and—when the next phase is funded—a connection to Merlin Olsen Park with minimal street crossings. No other route can offer this type of safe, continuous link.

While individual preferences matter, our responsibility is to consider the long-term good reflected in multiple community-driven plans. Trail development is a major priority citywide, and projects like the new pedestrian underpass at 600 South Main show our commitment to active transportation and outdoor access for people of all ages and abilities.

As we move forward, we will work closely with residents to maintain the character of Canyon Road through thoughtful landscaping, tree placement, and careful design of retaining walls to minimize their visual impact.

The recent survey highlighted both real neighborhood concerns and a broader desire for connected, safe, walkable communities. Balancing these goals requires difficult choices, but we must keep our long-term vision in mind.

In conclusion, I am recommending the 8-foot shared-use path design and asking for a head nod from City Council to proceed. I believe this approach benefits the entire community for the long term.

We will post this statement on the city's project website for reference.