



**RIDGEFIELD CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING AGENDA**

**Thursday, August 7, 2025  
RACC - Columbia Assembly Room  
510 Pioneer Street, Ridgefield, WA 98642**

- I. STUDY SESSION - 4:00 P.M.**
  - 1. 35th Avenue/Gee Creek Plateau Extension Project - Steve Stuart, City Manager**
- II. ADJOURN**



# South 35th Avenue Corridor Extension Project

City Council Work Session #1



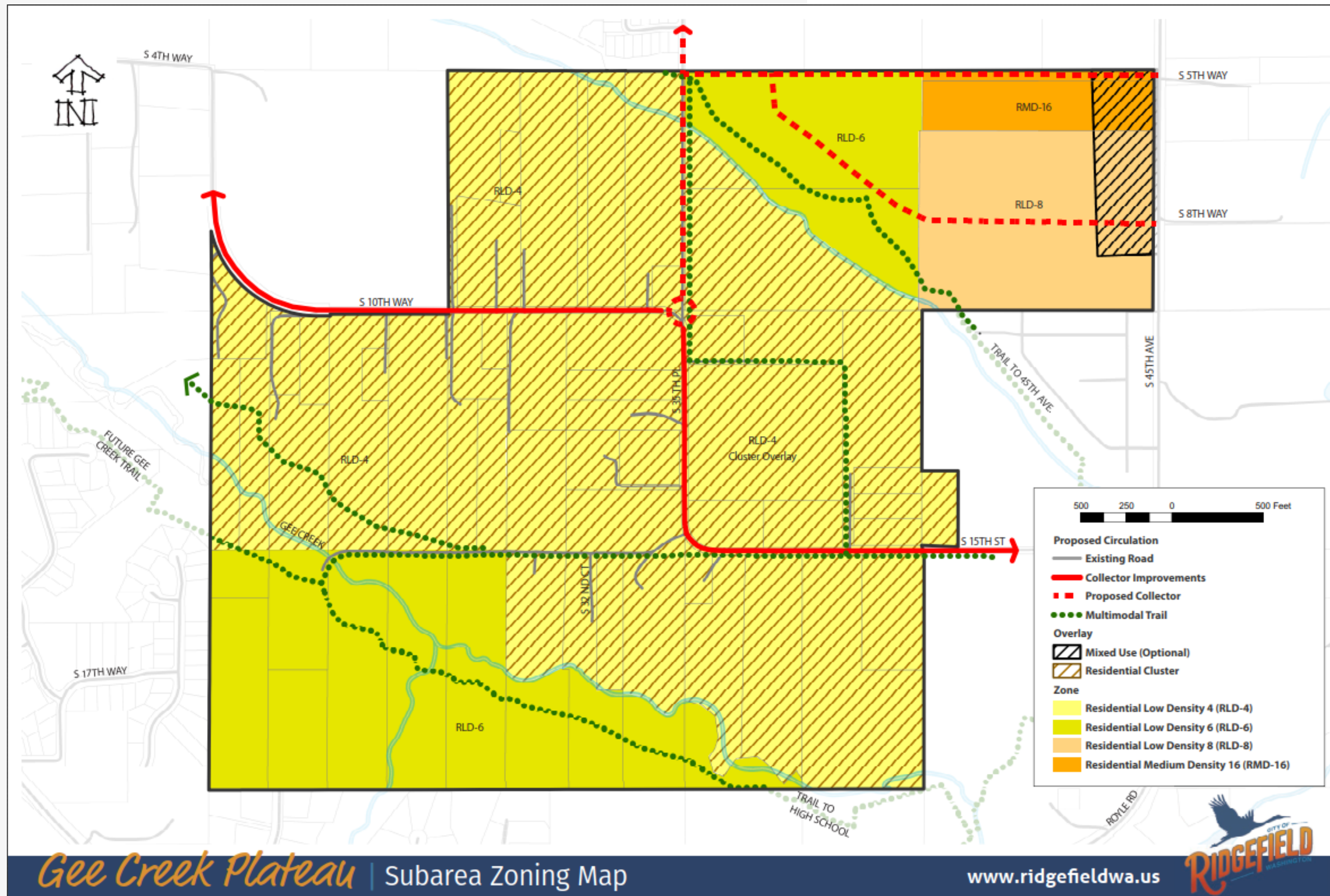
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# Agenda

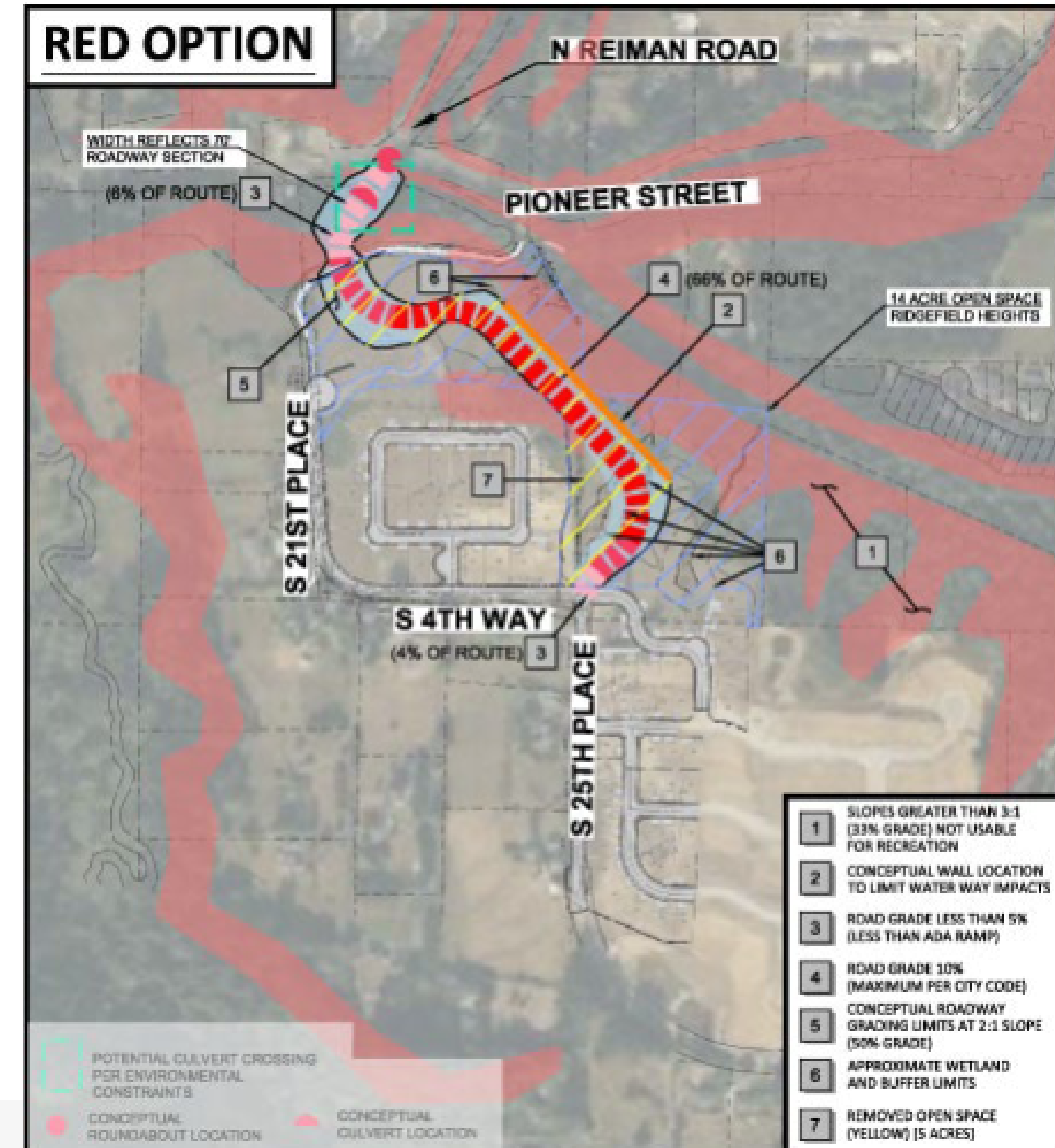
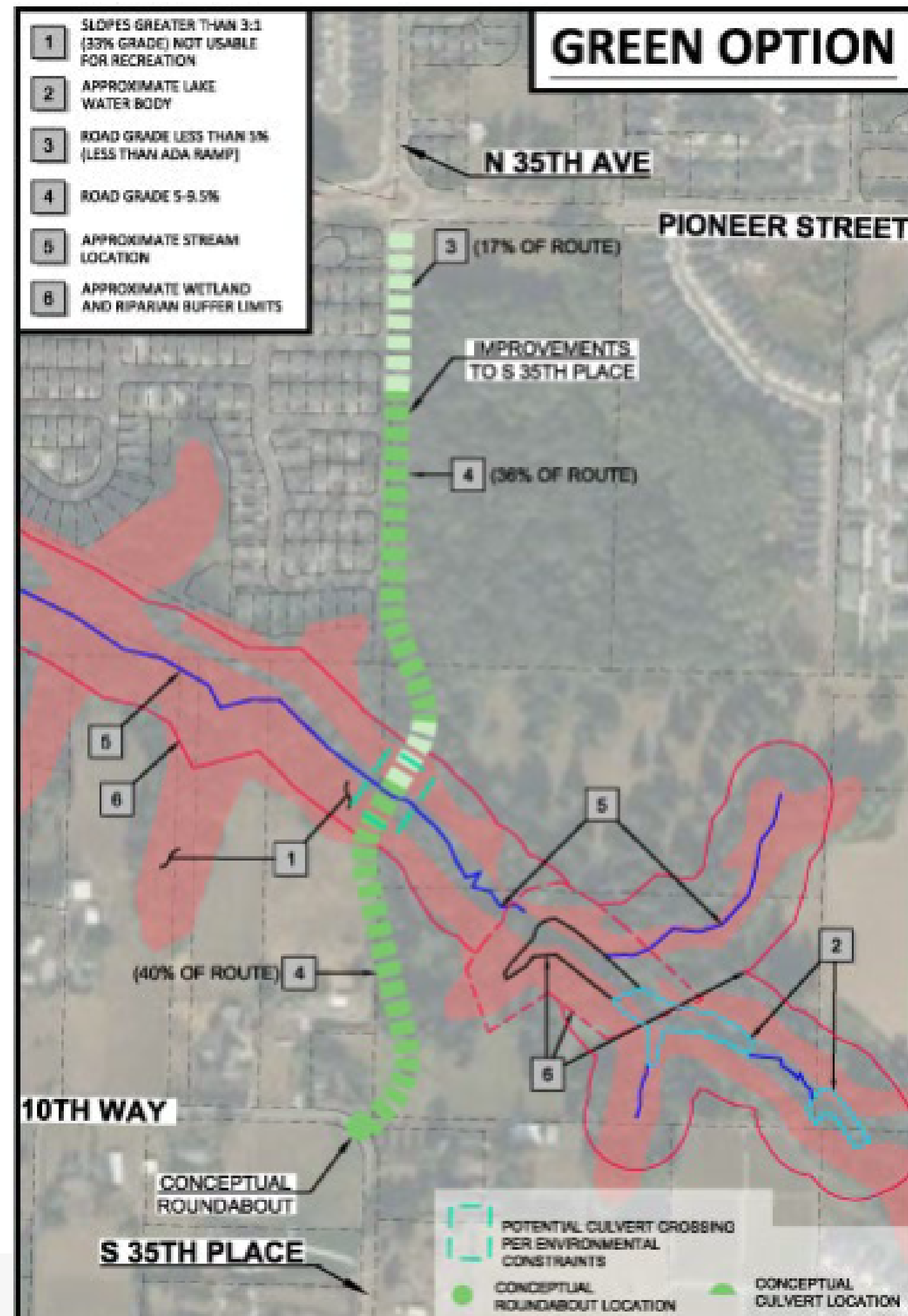
- Background
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process Overview
- Project Schedule and Opportunities for Engagement
- Draft Purpose and Need Statement
  - Discussion: Refining the Purpose and Need Statement
- Next Steps

# Background

- The Gee Creek Plateau Sub Area Plan identified the 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor as a key project to improve travel reliability and connectivity.
- An alternatives analysis beginning in 2023 developed 5 alignment concepts designed to minimize impacts, preserve historic structures, and maximize multimodal connectivity.
- Previous engagement included neighborhood and public meetings and stakeholder interviews.
- Council members and City staff ultimately supported moving forward with the **Red and Green options** (shown on next slide) to move into the environmental impact process.

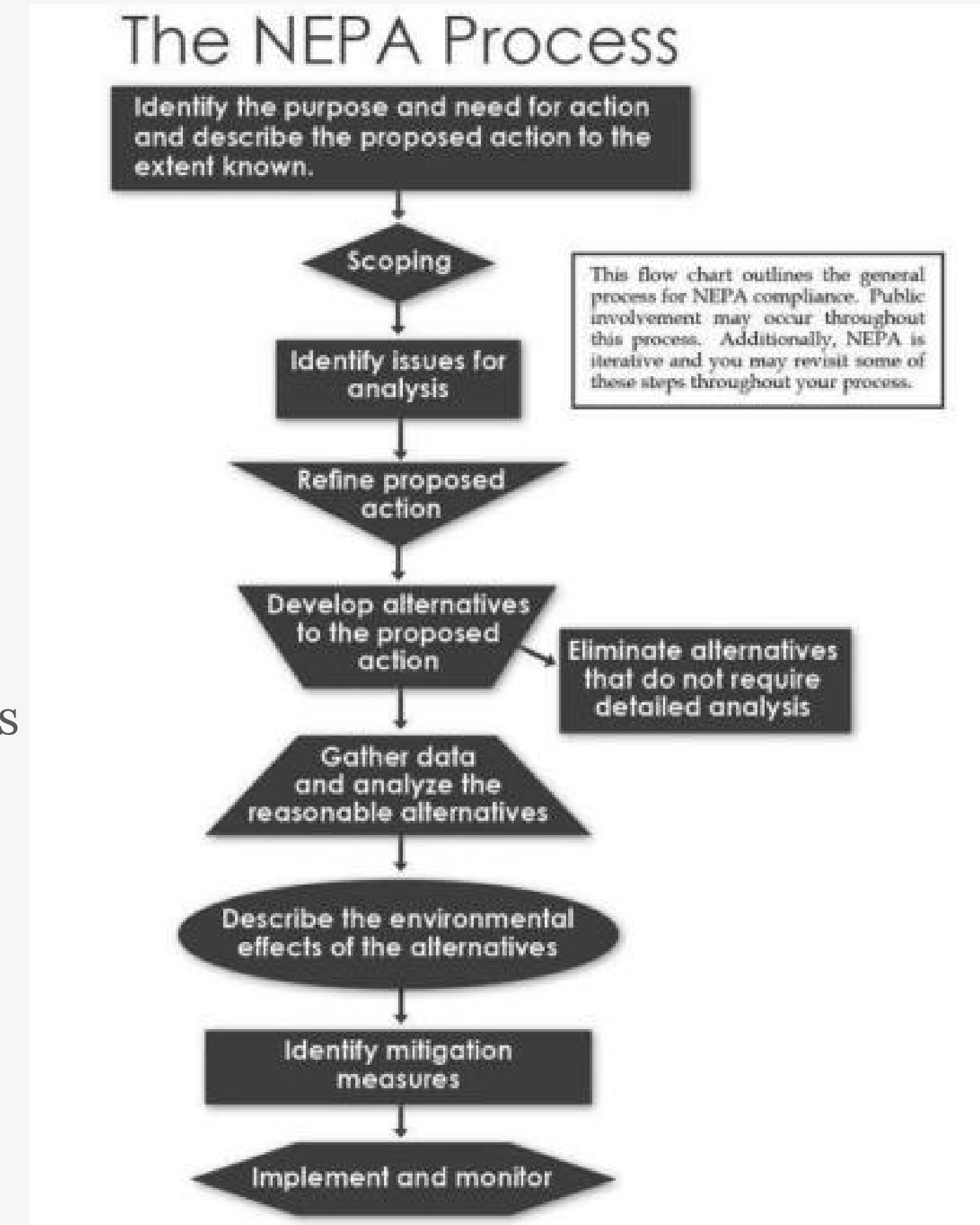


# Background - Red & Green Options

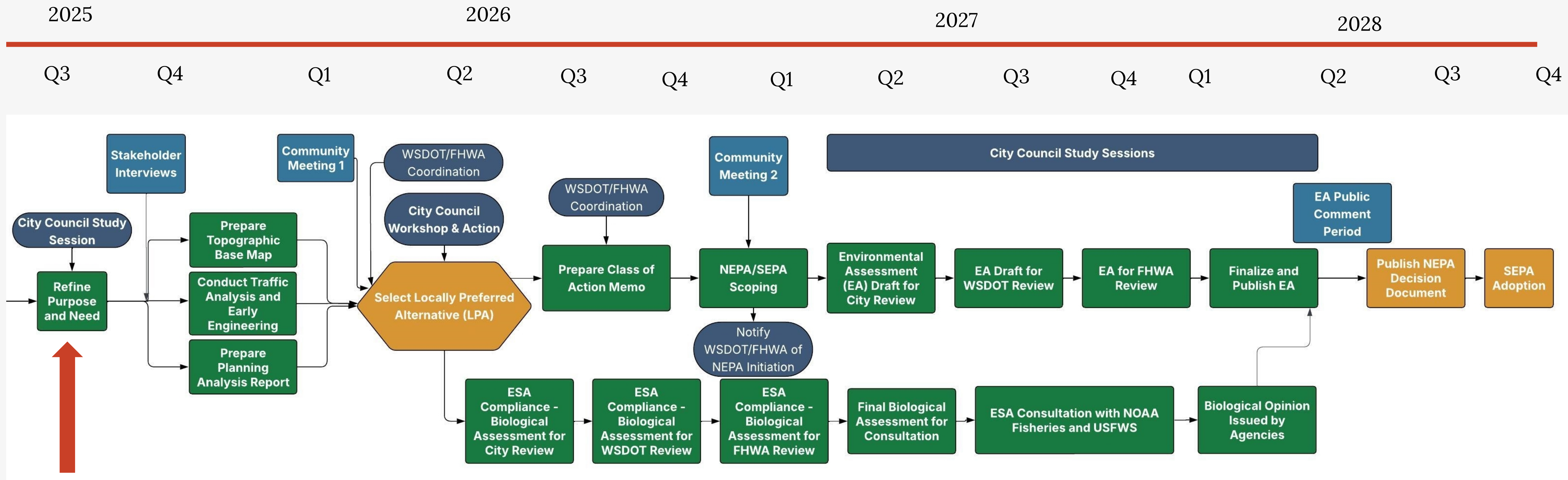


# NEPA Process Overview

- The **National Environmental Policy Act** (NEPA) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of proposed actions before making decisions.
  - NEPA is required because the City anticipates **federal funding** for this project.
- Next steps before starting the formal NEPA process include:
  - **Refining the draft Purpose and Need Statement** to inform selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative.
  - Completing additional traffic and other analysis, stakeholder interviews, and Council workshops to **select a Locally Preferred Alternative** to study in the NEPA documentation.
  - Working with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to **determine the level of NEPA review required** (class of action).
  - **Starting a scoping process** to get early input from the community, agencies, and tribes on the draft Purpose and Need, alternative, and environmental review topics to study.
- NEPA documentation anticipated to include the following topics:
  - Geology and Soils
  - Transportation
  - Noise
  - Ecosystems
  - Cultural Resources
  - Hazardous Materials
  - Special Flood Hazard Areas
  - Water Quality and Stormwater
  - Land Use and Parks and Recreation
  - Social and Community Resources
  - Visual Quality
  - Air Quality



# Project Schedule and Opportunities for Engagement



We are here

# Purpose and Need Statement

- As defined by NEPA, a Purpose and Need statement should:
  - Inform the public and decision-makers about the rationale for allocating funds to the project, emphasizing its priority over other essential projects or programs.
  - Explain why any significant environmental impacts identified through analysis would be considered acceptable based on the project's importance.
  - Determine the range of alternatives to be considered. An agency may dismiss, without detailed study, any alternative that fails to meet the project's purpose and need.
  - Include needs that are supported by data.

# Existing Draft Purpose and Need Statement

- From the November 2024 alternatives analysis report:  
“The Gee Creek Plateau Sub Area has limited access to the greater City of Ridgefield, though located at the heart of the City. This project will increase access to the growing area to improve local travel reliability and connectivity. This will be completed by provision of direct access to Pioneer Street to the north.”



# Discussion: Refining the Purpose and Need Statement

- **Example Revised Purpose:** The purpose of the South 35th Avenue Corridor Extension Project is to **enhance access** between the Gee Creek Plateau Subarea and the greater City of Ridgefield for all transportation modes, **maintain local travel reliability** in the future, and **support future growth** in the area.
- **Example Revised Needs:**
  - A direct route between the Gee Creek Plateau Subarea and Pioneer Street is needed to address the limited options for accessing the greater City of Ridgefield on the existing roadway network.
  - Transportation improvements are needed to ensure compliance with the City's adopted mobility standards, serve travel demand, and promote safe and efficient movement as traffic volumes increase.
  - Transportation improvements are needed to support the City's long-term land use and development goals, including projections for substantial residential growth in the Gee Creek Plateau subarea by 2045.

# Discussion: Refining the Purpose and Need Statement

- What do you and your constituents view as the primary purpose of this project? Examples could include:
  - Supporting future anticipated growth in the Gee Creek area
  - Providing a more direct connection for all modes of transportation
  - Improving travel reliability
- Is there a single purpose of the project, or does the project serve multiple purposes?
  - Alternatives Analysis identified need for alternative access between Gee Creek Plateau Subarea and greater City as primary baseline need.
- If there are multiple purposes, are some more important than others? What are the true “drivers” of the project?

# Next Steps

Identify key stakeholder to seek input on preferred alternatives

Conduct stakeholder interviews

Initiate Pre-NEPA/SEPA Analysis to inform selection of Locally Preferred Alternative

Prepare for first Community Workshop to seek input on Locally Preferred Alternative