

Montgomery Place Neighbourhood Access Concepts

ISSUE

Montgomery Place Neighbourhood is bound by active rail lines on three sides creating access issues to and from the neighbourhood for residents and emergency services. What options are feasible for developing alternative neighbourhood access to the Montgomery Place Neighbourhood that would eliminate at-grade rail crossings?

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held March 26, 2018, received a report on Phase 2 of the Rail Relocation versus Grade Separation Feasibility Study. The administrative report included the grade separation assessment at 11th Street West (11th Street). The exhibit illustrating the concept eliminating the at-grade rail crossings is attached as Appendix 1. Highlights of the proposed concept include:

- No at-grade rail crossings;
- All movements are maintained; and
- 11th Street is vertically aligned over the rail lines (11th Street is re-constructed up, over, and back down over the rail lines).

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on November 21, 2022, received the Circle Drive West Functional Planning Study – Final Report and resolved, in part:

- “3. That the Administration proceed with developing alternative neighbourhood access concepts for Montgomery Place, including stakeholder engagement, that does not include at-grade rail crossings and report back when complete; and”

The development of alternative neighbourhood access concepts for Montgomery Place was out of the scope of the Circle Drive West Functional Planning Study, resulting in the resolution noted above. The outcomes of reviewing alternative access concepts could potentially inform a future decision to revisit the interchange configuration illustrated in Appendix 1 (including revisiting the premise of 11th Street being re-constructed up, over, and back down over the rail lines.) There is also potential benefit of alternative access being much less costly. To summarize, if there is feasible alternative access unencumbered by rail, is the 11th Street re-alignment as currently proposed required? This report begins to examine that question.

CURRENT STATUS

On February 8, 2024, an open house event was held for residents of Montgomery Place. The goal of the engagement was to gather feedback, specifically to collect ideas on alternative grade-separated access to and from Montgomery Place. A total of 134 residents attended the event. The engagement summary is attached as Appendix 2.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The residents identified the following four potential schemes for alternative grade-separated access to and from Montgomery Place.

1. Via Valley Road, a north-south connection beneath the rail lines and connecting with existing Dundonald Avenue.
2. Via Fletcher Road, an east-west connection over Circle Drive and the rail line and connecting with existing Dundonald Avenue.
3. Via Fairmont Drive, a north-south connection beneath the rail lines and connecting with existing 11th Street.
4. Via Fairlight Drive, a north-south connection beneath the rail lines and connecting with existing 11th Street.

The high-level concepts are included in Appendix 3.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information only and has no financial implications.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Privacy, legal, social, and environmental implications were not reviewed as part of the preparation of this report.

NEXT STEPS

The next step is to complete a functional planning study that would further develop the four concepts. The Montgomery Place Neighbourhood Access Functional Planning Study will be added to the Saskatoon Transportation Master Plan list of infrastructure projects for future prioritization.

Funding to complete the Montgomery Place Neighbourhood Access Functional Planning Study would then be considered through the next multi-year budget process.

APPENDICES

1. 11th Street Grade Separation Concept
2. Engagement Summary
3. Four Grade-Separated Access Concepts

Report Approval

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Approved by: Terry Schmidt, General Manager of Transportation and Construction

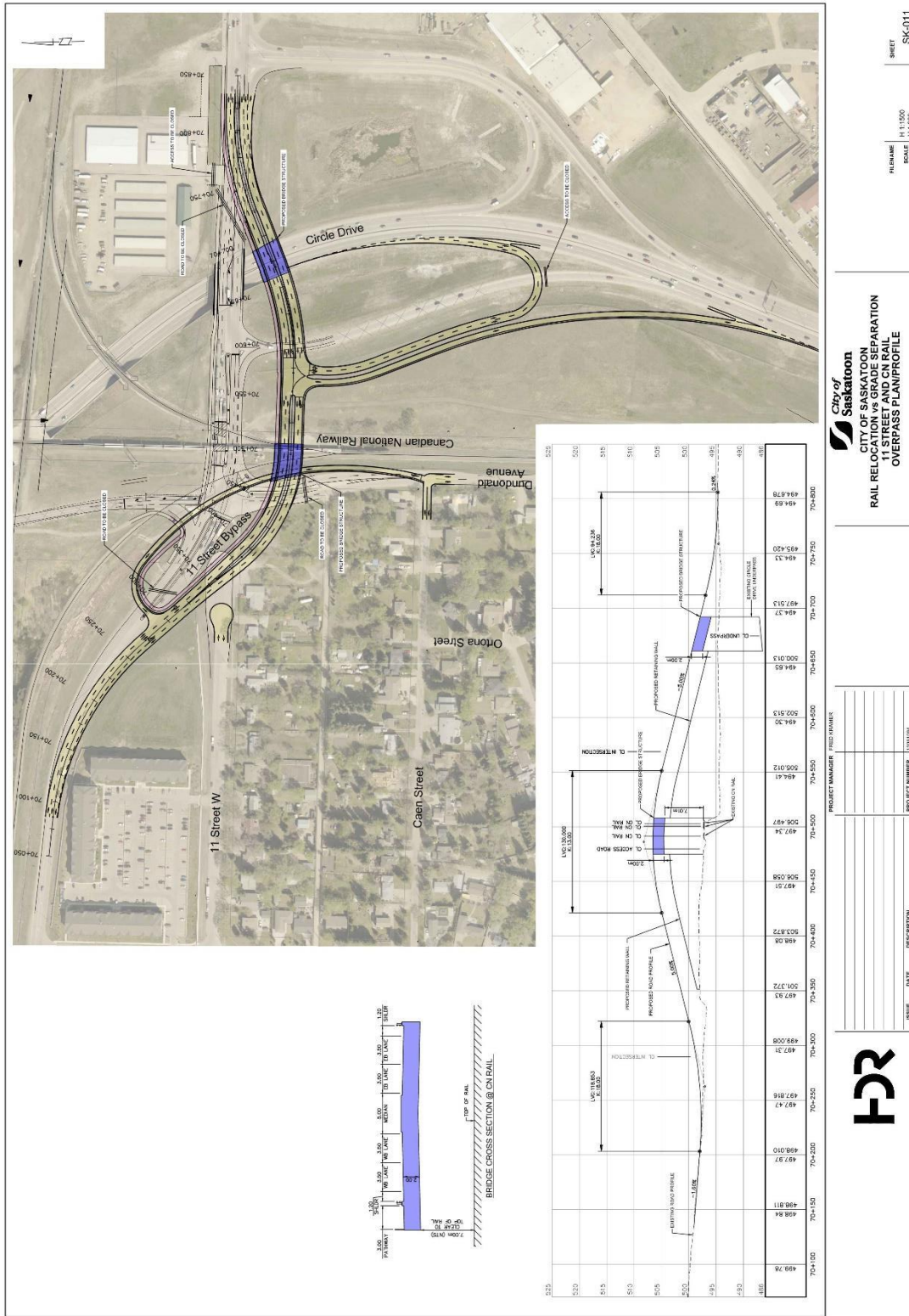


Figure 20: Proposed Conceptual Plan and Profile for 11th Street W @ CN



Montgomery Place Alternate Access

What We Heard - Engagement Summary
April 10, 2024



Engagement Summary

The City of Saskatoon is gathering ideas on grade-separated access for the Montgomery Place neighbourhood.

In 2021, Administration completed a feasibility study to examine options for reducing rail delays in the city. The study included a conceptual design for an interchange at 11th Street West and Circle Drive that would provide grade separation between the roadway and railway tracks. Administration recommended that the Grade Separation Concept Plan be coordinated with the long-term recommendations of the Circle Drive West Functional Planning Study that was underway at the time.

The Circle Drive West Functional Planning Study also included a conceptual design for the 11th Street West and Circle Drive interchange. City Council moved that the Recommended Plan of the Circle Drive West functional planning study and Grade Separation Concept plan be jointly listed on the Saskatoon Transportation Master Plan. City Council also moved:

“That the Administration proceed with developing alternative neighbourhood access concepts for Montgomery Place, including stakeholder engagement, that does not include at-grade rail crossings and report back when complete”.

Summary of engagement activities

The goal of this engagement was to **consult with** the Montgomery Place community on the Montgomery Place Alternate Access.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Strategy

| Phase | | Participants | Engagement Goal | Engagement Activities |
|-------|-----------------|--|--|------------------------|
| 1 | Gather Feedback | Montgomery Place Residents Montgomery Place Community Association | Gather ideas on grade-separated access for the Montgomery Place neighbourhood. | Open House Engage Page |

Open House

Flyers were mailed out to the Montgomery Place Community Association and residents of the Montgomery Place Neighbourhood. The Open House event was held for residents of Montgomery Place on February 8th, 2024, and had 134 residents in attendance. Boards and maps were set up with project team members available to answer questions. Comment cards and feedback forms were made available for residents to give their comments and show where they want the grade-separated access into Montgomery Place. Not all the participants filled out the comment card or feedback form at the event. 28 comment cards and feedback forms were collected, 13 residents emailed their suggestions, and several people spoke to City staff after the event or by phone to provide their ideas.

What We Learned

Proposed Locations for Alternate Access

Five respondents mentioned keeping the existing access for Circle Drive to 11th Street the way it is. It was also suggested by two residents that the exit could be adjusted to accommodate westbound 11th Street access only and to install a new ramp from Circle Drive southbound to accommodate eastbound 11th Street traffic. Seven participants indicated their support for a grade-separated location access via 11th Street. Two participants suggested an overpass of both the main and spur rail lines on 11th Street east to west. Three participants suggested the building of a bridge on 11th Street over the train rails (north to south), east of Circle Drive. The other two did not specify which direction they wanted the overpass to go. A participant asserted that building an overpass over 11th and Circle would be the best long-term solution to achieve better traffic flow, safety for people walking/biking, and easier access to emergency services.

10 participants noted that they would like the alternate access via Valley Road. Two participants suggested creating an overpass or underpass at the rail on Dundonald Avenue to reconnect Dundonald to Valley Road and create a traffic light at Valley Road and Dundonald for all-way travel.

Two participants suggested that an overpass or an underpass be done at Fairlight Drive / Elevator Road.

Three participants supported a route near Fletcher Road. One participant suggested a pedestrian overpass near Fletcher Road into Montgomery.

For others, an alternative access would be a north-south access road from the Circle Drive and Clancy Drive area which would go under the existing railway tracks and connect with 11th Street. Some suggested the southbound off-ramp from Clancy to remain as is and give Clancy Drive a lane to exit onto Circle Drive South. One person suggested leaving the existing access as their preference.

General Feedback

Some meeting attendees expressed their concern for the noise that would be caused if there was a flyover at the 11th Street and Circle Drive intersection. Heavy traffic was another concern raised, some participants mentioned that a non-grade separated proposal would increase commute time because there is a greater volume of train traffic in the North-South rail line than in the East-to-West rail line. Others also talked about how tractor-trailers using ramps at the 11th and Circle interchange could have challenges navigating the turn and grades.

Several people expressed concerns related to costs and that the most cost-efficient option should be pursued. One person indicated that a new interchange will be too expensive and cannot be afforded. Others indicated that access to fire and ambulance services should be the first priority. Two participants indicated that fixing the train issue as an alternate solution.

It was also noted that the grade-separate access on 11th Street would cause a major noise nuisance for all the residents east and south of Lancaster Boulevard. It was pointed out by another resident that the traffic signal at Clancy and Circle Drive be removed for people's safety.

Some participants indicated that they do not like the idea of exiting Circle Drive and going through Fairhaven. Four participants did not support any alternate access at 11th Street and Circle Drive. Two participants were against the idea of having access changes to the Clancy Drive and Circle Drive intersection.

Event Feedback

Some participants denoted that more clarity was needed as to how the boards were laid out or requested a PowerPoint presentation. Others noted that more city staff would have been beneficial.

Limitations

Although overall attendance was positive for the open house, not all Montgomery Place residents attended the open house or provided feedback using other methods.

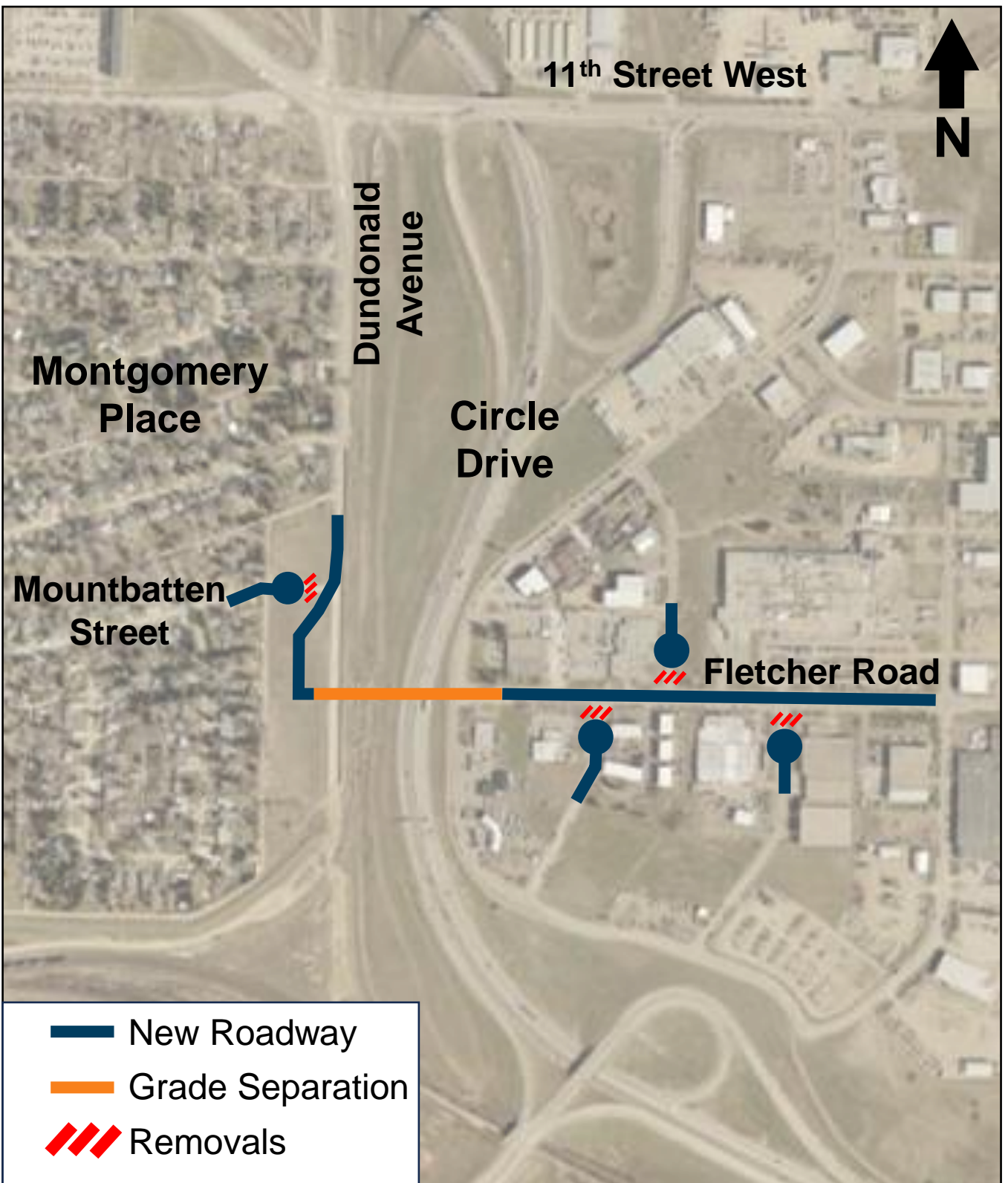
Next Steps

Engagement results will be shared with the project team in the Transportation Department to inform next steps. The engagement summary will be appended to the Administration report for the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation (SPCT).



Montgomery Place Access

Concept #1 – Valley Road



11th Street West






Dundonald Avenue

Montgomery Place

Circle Drive

Mountbatten Street

Fletcher Road

-  New Roadway
-  Grade Separation
-  Removals

Montgomery Place Access

Concept #2 – Fletcher Road





Montgomery Place Access

Concept #3 – Fairmont Drive

