



Response to Park Comments

Thank you for participating in our August 2022 public event for the Arlington Avenue Bridges project. RTC received several comments regarding Wingfield Park and the Truckee River Whitewater Park at Wingfield. Addressing these comments is relevant to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) decision-making regarding these recreation resources; specifically, a finding of *de minimis* impact under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. We have reviewed public input with the City of Reno, who owns and maintains the whitewater park and is our partner on the Arlington Avenue Bridges project. This email provides an update on design efforts and construction approach relative to Wingfield Park and the Truckee River Whitewater Park at Wingfield.

Connection between east and west portions of Wingfield Park:

The Arlington Avenue Bridges project will not reduce connectivity between the east and west portions of Wingfield Park. The existing pathway under the north bridge will be maintained with improved lighting. RTC and the City of Reno are also exploring a mid-block pedestrian crossing of Arlington Avenue on the island. The technical and safety evaluation of this potential crossing is in progress. The results will be presented along with the final project plans at the fourth public meeting, prior to construction.

Impacts to whitewater park from new pier configuration of the north bridge:

As part of this transportation improvement project, RTC will mitigate impacts to the whitewater park associated with the new pier configuration that will exist when the north bridge is reconstructed. To that end, RTC has hired Recreation Engineering & Planning (REP), the original whitewater park designer, to update the design of the whitewater park upstream and downstream of the north bridge. These updates are intended to preserve the safety and functionality of the park after the new bridge is constructed. The design is summarized as follows:

- Immediately upstream of the bridge, the existing drop structure would be modified and slightly reoriented from its current position. This would involve shifting the drop structure slightly to channel center and angling the drop to river-left of the proposed new bridge pier.
- Portions of the existing rock grouting along the river edges and surrounding the drop structure would also be replaced and reset. There will be no exposed sharp rocks or riprap used along the river banks.
- The channel between the upstream and downstream drop structures on either side of the bridge would be recontoured. Based on information received from the Carson Truckee Water Conservancy District (CTWCD), it is estimated that up to four feet of sediment has accumulated in this area. This includes a depositional island which has formed between the north bridge and the upstream drop feature. Recontouring the channel would involve removing the island and sediment between the upstream and downstream drop structures on either side of the north bridge. The pool at the end of the upstream drop structure would be deepened and regraded to improve functionality and recreational safety.

These modifications along this 330-foot-stretch of the river would help keep kayakers from being directed into the new bridge pier and alleviate the eddy current that has developed which has led to the sediment deposition. The whitewater park designers will conduct a post-construction evaluation of the entire park.



Construction impacts:

RTC is planning for construction during 2025 and 2026, and anticipates that one bridge will be reconstructed at a time. To facilitate construction of the substructure for each bridge, the water beneath the bridge would be diverted to the other channel of the Truckee River to create a “dry” work zone. The window for channel diversions to facilitate this work is between July 1 and October 31 per CTWCD requirements. This window may be extended through November with CTWCD approval, depending on flow conditions during each construction season. Because the north channel is larger with more flow, the feasibility of diverting all flow to the south channel will be evaluated at the time of construction. If needed, an alternate plan for the north bridge is to construct the bridge in two phases with more localized river diversions.

Wingfield Park will be closed during the approximately 2-year construction duration. Public access to the river and whitewater park would be maintained for the majority of the construction duration, when safe for the public and workers. However, the proposed river diversion plans would restrict public access to one channel or the other during in-channel work for bridge construction. Locations for put-ins and take-outs in the project area during construction will be identified in conjunction with development of river diversion plans and specifications, which are in progress. Public safety will be paramount in developing the plans and approach for managing river access during construction. This information will be shared with the public at the fourth public meeting, prior to construction.

When river diversions are not in place, the public will have access to both river channels. However, restrictions to public river access may be necessary for safety-critical bridge construction activities over the river. RTC will coordinate with the City of Reno and the whitewater community to develop communication protocols in the event of short-duration river access restrictions during safety-critical bridge construction activities. The contractor will install overhang forms and debris netting on bridges for over-water work. Prior to implementing short-duration river access restrictions, the contractor will establish a safety-critical zone in the vicinity of bridge construction activities and evacuate the public from this zone.

Prior to construction, RTC and the City will keep the public apprised of recreation facility closures, access restrictions, and available river access locations during construction. Temporary signage will be placed along the Truckee River to alert recreationalists of construction activities and provide sources of information on the project and potential river access restrictions. A Public Communications Plan will be developed and implemented in coordination with the City of Reno that includes measures to keep the public apprised of recreation facility closures, access restrictions, and available river access locations during construction. These measures will include, but are not limited to: signage at the project limits, signage at upstream river access points, coordination and communication with recreation outfitters, emails to project contact list, and press releases.

Thank you again for your input on this project.



Park Comments from August 2022 Public Meeting
<p>As a user of the whitewater kayak park, I am most concerned with making sure the construction optimizes the whitewater park and a whitewater park designer is involved in the process.</p>
<p>Please take advantage of this opportunity to preserve and enhance the whitewater park for future improved kayaking. This can help preserve the esthetic, environmental, economic, and quality of like issues that are important to the community and should also be important to the agency's with stewardship of the region.</p>
<p>Don't care about bridges but do care about the whitewater park. Hire designer</p>
<p>I don't really care what the bridge looks like, but you need to fix the whitewater park while you're there. This will change everything about the park. Holes 1-5. It's important you hire a professional company to assess and fix the whitewater park so it is usable for kayakers and surfers again.</p>
<p>1) Impacts to existing whitewater features upstream and downstream of the north bridge may not be de-minimus. Whitewater features are tricky to design and predict; they may be adversely impacted despite best intentions, which could result in significant impacts to recreational use and the local economy vis a vie cancellation of whitewater demonstration and competition events. The change from 2 piers to 1 sounds good at first blush, but it may result in unintended impacts to upstream and downstream whitewater features and eddies. There must be comprehensive engagement with the whitewater feature designer during bridge design phase AND post-construction phase. Funding must be set aside for post-construction evaluation and in-channel riverbed corrective action as needed if adverse impact to whitewater features and associated eddies is observed.</p> <p>2) Temporary closure of the entire Wingfield Park and river during construction is draconian and may actually increase the safety risk to boaters and inner tubers floating toward the construction zone from the west by decreasing their takeout options. It is imperative for the safety of boaters and inner tubers that the existing river takeouts must remain accessible on both sides of the south channel immediately upstream of the first drop on the south channel. Therefore, the boom across the south side of the river must be moved downstream from the position shown in the presentation to immediately above the first drop on the south channel. Also for the safety of boaters and inner tubers, the boom across the north side of the river must be angled diagonally NW to SE from the upstream north bank (1st Ave area) to a point where calm water occurs directly upstream of the island and thence to the western tip of the island itself to funnel floaters to the south channel takeouts. Signage placed well upstream of the river boom must prominently and clearly direct floaters to move to the right side and takeout at the designated access points near the entrance to the south channel.</p> <p>3) All 3 pedestrian bridges can and should safely remain open during construction with temporary fencing placed on the island where necessary to keep pedestrians out of the construction zone. In particular, access to the pedestrian bridge upstream (west) of the construction zone must be maintained to allow egress of the subset of boaters and inner tubers that will inevitably takeout on the island upstream of the first drop on the south channel – don't force them to re-enter the water after they land and cross the south channel current right above the drops and the construction zone to get to the preferred takeout on the south side of the river (Barbara Bennett Park) – that would represent a potential liability concern for the City of Reno if someone gets hurt.</p>
<p>You must not use riprap rock along the white water park. It is a danger to people because of the sharp edges. The angles of rocks make it hard to walk on. It looks ugly. Why would you remove the granite rocks and purchase ugly rocks that is just plain wasteful and cut costly and lazy. Do the job right or don't do it all.</p>

Park Comments from August 2022 Public Meeting

I am a regular user of the whitewater park. I see no information in the design criteria about maintaining or improving this critical component of the river experience and. Ridge construction design. Features 2 and 3 are particularly at risk. Please involve a WW park designer to ensure the WW park remains!

I respectfully request: No sharp rocks. Keep at least 1 channel open during construction, ideally with a permanent feature to control that. Keep the kayak features working, ideally with adjustable features. Thanks

The kayak park is a valuable asset to the citizens of Reno and places Reno into a small pool of cities west of the rocky mountains with such an amenity. The park allows a safe and controlled environment for new and experienced kayakers to learn and improve their skills. Again, this is an extremely rare opportunity to be able to practice skills in a controlled environment close to home. The whitewater park should be studied during this design to avoid costly damages, and unsafe building materials/ practices that will ultimately cost the citizens of Reno more money to fix later. Please coordinate with the original designers, and allow your designers to do the same. A small amount of coordination now will save money and possibly lives later. Please reach out if you have any follow up.

I am very excited about replacing the Arlington bridge. It's fallen into disrepair and reached the end of its life. I am concerned about the blocking of the Truckee River during the duration of this project. This waterway is the lifeblood of our community and was the focal point of revitalization efforts 20 years ago with the construction of the whitewater park. I request that the contractor is required to keep at least one channel open at all times during construction. As a frequent user of the whitewater park I am concerned about the impact on the river features. Certainly any disruption of the river bed will alter flow dynamics, but it's essential that the existing features of the whitewater park be maintained or improved. Please employ hydrologists and engineers who will be empowered to make alterations that are favorable to recreational usage.

Thoughts: * Please, improve the natural vegetation within the project as much as possible, more trees the better. * Listen to the paddlers, they bring life to the park and we need to keep and improve the surrounding water amenities along the river. * How is stormwater run-off going to be addressed? Are there ways to incorporate landscaping that would help?

I am concerned about the impact of this project on the quality of Reno's nationally-recognized whitewater park. I am a frequent user (whitewater kayaker) of the park with my husband and two children (age 6yrs and 8yrs old). We all kayak in the park regularly in spring, summer, and fall. My husband and I kayak in the park in the winter as well when water levels rise from storms (too cold for our kids to join us then). In addition to kayaking in the park's features, my kids also like swimming and boogie boarding in the features. Our favorite feature in the park is Hole #3. I would like consideration given to how the new bridge pylon may change the speed and angle of the river's current through Hole #3 and the immediate upstream and downstream areas. I would also like consideration to be given to how the new pylon may change sediment deposition in/near Hole #3. I believe that consultation with the original whitewater park designer is a good start. But I think public comment from regular whitewater kayaker park users and professional input from the national non-profit organization American Whitewater will also be key. Lastly, the complete closure of the river for two years seems unusual and potentially excessive. I would appreciate hearing a more detailed rationale for why this is necessary -- perhaps the closure could be limited to time windows when heavy machinery is actively working in the area? Specifically, perhaps one bridge could be done first (leaving the other channel open for river use) and then the other bridge could be done second? This would enable people to always float through and recreate on the channel that is not under construction. I understand that safety comes first, but with the details provided in the video presentation, it is unclear as to whether this 2yr closure is truly necessary. For example: will construction truly be pursued simultaneously on both channels and for 730 continuous days without breaks?

Park Comments from August 2022 Public Meeting

Hello, I very much appreciated the opportunity to attend the presentation at the McKinley Arts center recently and I wanted to codify some of my feedback. 1) Please consider texturing, styling, any concrete surfaces. Please especially consider the potential for art on the pylons as can be viewed from the street level down and the walking path underneath from Wingfield. This is a perfect opportunity to really express the historical identity of the district and the area with panels of cement-art. 2) Please ensure that whatever light option is selected that the light-pollution is minimized through design. Focus the light to the street and walking path. 3) Consider inlaid light on the bridge itself so the overhead lighting can be dimmed while maintaining safe levels of lighting. 4) There must be a high level of coordination between bridge constructors and the proposed Kimpton Hotel next to the Episcopal church on Island. 5) When the water is diverted from north or south please clean the river. Please remove the sediment, glass, and other refuse. 6) When the water is diverted please reconstruct any water features that have been lost (and hopefully made more resilient). Especially focus on combatting the eddies that have been created on the north side (they are awful to tube through!) 7) Possibly widen walkway underneath bridge if possible or at least make a more stylized fence/barrier along the northside of the pedestrian path. 8) A clear disembarkation route/station must be provided for tubers. The current disembarkation is catty-corner to the Eddy//parallel to the DA's office off Sierra. 9) Is there no way to allow the northside of the river to flow and remain accessible during any phase of construction?

Aesthetics of bridge look good. I have concerns about the effect on the whitewater park. The park has never functioned the same after the construction of Sierra St. bridge. The whitewater community in this town begged the city to consult a whitewater park professional when they were forced to block the river and dredge debris to open the south channel and they chose not to. The result was further degradation to the usability of holes 2 - 5. I beg you, a small part of this project and since you are already pulling the difficult permits to block off the river and put construction equipment in there. PLEASE take advantage of the opportunity to consult with a professional whitewater park designer to ensure at the minimum, no further degradation of the features (per federal law) and hopefully take advantage of this historic opportunity to restore the park to its original functionality for whitewater recreation.

You must not use riprap rock along the white water park. It is a danger to people because of the sharp edges. The angles of rocks make it hard to walk on. It looks ugly. Why would you remove the granite rocks and purchase ugly rocks that is just plain wasteful and cut costly and lazy. Do the job right or don't do it all.