

2nd Broadway path approved by county

Questions remain about construction start-date and schedule.

By Michael Polhamus

A final contract was agreed on Monday that will allow construction of a pathway on Broadway's south side, extending from Flat Creek to Spring Gulch Road.

The pathway is one of the final pieces in a network for cyclists and pedestrians that will connect downtown Jackson to the top of Teton Pass. Completion of the network is estimated to require just under \$15 million — \$21,000 less than the total funds allotted.

The contract gives \$240,000 to Jorgensen Engineering to oversee construction of the pathway, which is to be built by Westwood Curtis Construction.

"I strongly support this," Jackson Mayor Mark Barron said before voting to approve the contract. "This is an investment in our future."

Far more pedestrians use the sidewalk along Broadway than 10 years ago, he said. Such a thing was unheard of 20 years ago, he said.

More cyclists and pedestrians are to be expected as safe avenues are established for them to go places that were once frequented by drivers only, Barron said.

The pathway will follow the south side of Broadway from Flat Creek to the "Y" intersection. From there it will jog north along Highway 22's southern edge to a point opposite the western end of Spring Gulch Road.

The cost for this portion of pathway is estimated at \$2.5 million, as was its twin on Broadway's north side, according to Jackson Hole Community Pathways documents.

Along Broadway these structures will consist of a separated sidewalk and cycletrack, Community Pathways plans show.

Construction on the northern of these continues, although in front of Walgreen's it will consist of only a gravel surface for the time being. The pathway for 50 feet on either side won't be completed until the crumbling hillside above is stabilized, Pathways Coordinator Brian Schilling said.

At least one person doubted whether work on the southern path should start before the northern one is finished.

Pete Jorgensen, formerly a principal of Jorgensen Engineering, said if members of either the Town Council or the county commission harbor any doubts as to what is going on with the project and the several segments to which it is connected, they should refuse to allow it to advance.

Jorgensen no longer holds any connection to Jorgensen Engineering, which he sold many years ago, he said.

A segment of pathway between the Indian Trails subdivision's pathway to Highway 22 remains to be built, but is under contract. The pathway bridge over the Snake River is still under construction. Another connector between Indian Trail and Spring Gulch Road has not yet been contracted but is

estimated to cost around \$850,000, according to Community Pathways documents.

The bridge will reach completion this fall, and the pathway from its east end to the Indian Trails subdivision is expected to be complete next summer at the latest, Schilling has said.