

Provided photo

An aerial view of the disjointed intersection of Center Avenue and 183rd Street, which could be a contributing factor in some traffic accidents at that location.

Most crashes along 183rd Street are rear-end crashes, according to the study. With so many opportunities for turning, vehicle deceleration can happen at any time, leading to a “surprisingly high number of mid-block crashes,” those that take place away from intersections.

The study suggests one way to address this issue could be to redesign 183rd as a two-lane road with a dedicated two-way turn lane down the center. Schaefer said public works staff could try out this idea on a segment of 183rd by repainting the center and using barrel barricades to block off the “closed” lanes.

“We can’t just say, ‘We think this will work.’ I don’t like the word ‘think,’” Schaefer said. “Before we fully implement something like this, we look to see if there’s a way we can do a temporary trial. Let’s see what is actually going to happen with the traffic.”

**West to Dixie Highway**

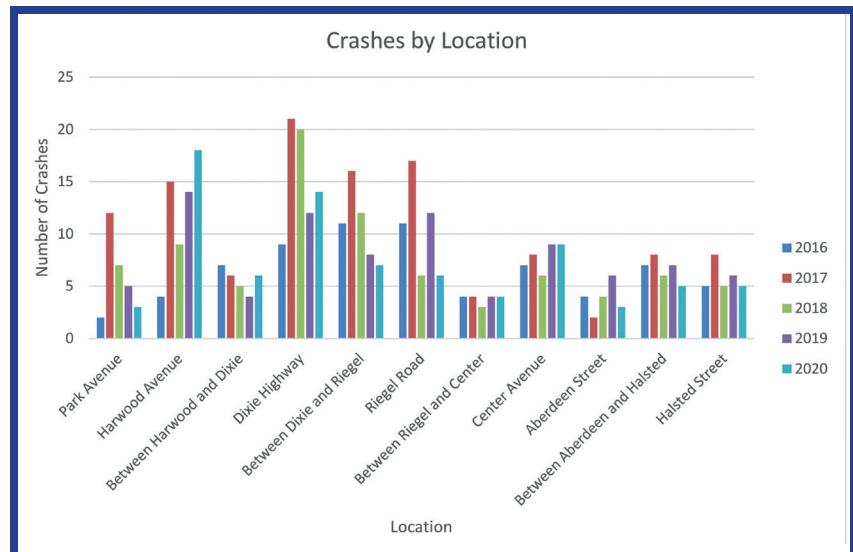
Between Riegel Road and Dixie Highway, drivers pass nine uncontrolled side street intersections. The traffic study recommends possibly blocking off some of these streets as dead-ends, funneling traffic to fewer intersections.

A concrete median wall is another mitigation mentioned by the study that could control where drivers turn. The wall would run down the length of the road, with breaks at certain intersections to let traffic through.

“That would probably work, but how much of an inconvenience is it to someone who lives on 183rd?” Schaefer said.

Of all the intersections along 183rd Street, Dixie Highway saw the most crashes during the study period, with 76, the study found. More than three-quarters of them happened during the day in dry weather conditions.

To reduce crashes at Dixie Highway and intersections all along 183rd, the



Provided chart

This chart from the 183rd Street Traffic Study shows the frequency of traffic accidents at intersections along the street.

study recommendations include installing dedicated right turn lanes and lengthening left turn lanes to prevent stacking cars into the median.

**At the Park Avenue intersection**

Finishing the study route takes us west past Harwood Avenue and under the railroad overpass to Park Avenue, the site of another vehicle crash fatality in 2018. In that incident, the driver crossed the four lanes of 183rd Street and hit the retaining wall.

From 2016 to 2020, Park Avenue experienced the second highest number of crashes with injuries among all intersections in the study. Though left turns are prohibited there, the study found a high frequency of drivers violating that rule.

The study offers the potential of installing a concrete median wall at Park Avenue to physically prevent left turns. Schaefer said he worries about this mitigation.

“It brings in another safety factor when you start putting concrete in the middle of the road. Could it create more of a hazard, if there is an accident?” he said.

To start with a simpler solution, Shaefer said the village may install lane delineators to emphasize the right-turn-only intersection at Park Avenue. Within the next two months, he plans to present a plan to the board for this and other near-term solutions.

“If there are certain things we can do that can have an impact right away to make the road safer or change the traffic speeds to help prevent an accident, those are things we can implement really easily,” he said.

The village can fund and execute smaller mitigations, Haney said. More extensive changes require work by village staff and contractors, and funding from state and local agencies.

In the meantime, village officials are absorbing the study’s recommendations and starting to sketch out potential plans for the road’s future.

“With staff and the engineers, we’re going through the mitigations to figure out what exactly we can do immediately based on the resources we have,” Haney said.

“We want everyone to be patient. We heard you. The volume of the recommendations, it takes some time to vet through. We need to get our foot in the door with planning agencies and funding agencies.

“We were anxious to find out what the issues were. Now we have the study, and the real work begins.”

**183rd Traffic Study Stand-out Numbers 2016 to 2020: years analyzed**

- 1.83 miles of roadway
- 11 location zones analyzed
- 438 crash reports analyzed
- 49% of crashes were rear-ended
- 24,800: Average daily vehicle count at the railroad viaduct
- 30,100: Estimated average by the year 2050
- 12,600: Average daily vehicle count just west of Halsted Street
- 15,200: Estimated average by the year 2050