



FAQ Adams Center Road Culvert

What is the culvert under Adams Center Road, and why was it replaced?

The 66-inch culvert, a pipe that carries stormwater, beneath Adams Center Road, is City Utilities-owned stormwater infrastructure. It had already been identified as being in poor condition and in need of replacement by City Utilities' engineering staff. If it had failed, it could have undermined the roadway and disrupted public transportation. See picture below of structurally failed culvert.

Was the culvert replacement related to the nearby data center development?

The culvert is owned by City Utilities and the responsibility of the utility. Separate from and not connected with nearby development, the culvert had been identified as being in poor condition and in need of replacement based on system assessments. While the nearby Google development brought additional attention to the area, the need to replace the culvert existed independently of the data center project.

Why did the developer become involved in the culvert replacement?

When Google approached City Utilities about widening Adams Center Road and extending the culvert for their access drive, City Utilities made clear that the existing culvert—owned by City Utilities—would need to be replaced to safely support that work. Because the culvert was already due for replacement, coordinating the work at the same time reduced construction impacts to traffic on Adams Center Road and avoided the need for separate projects and reduce costs for the Utility.

Did City Utilities pay for the developer's infrastructure?

No. City Utilities did not fund the developer's private infrastructure improvements. City Utilities' involvement related only to the existing culvert it already owned and was responsible for replacing. At no point was City Utilities going to pay for Google's infrastructure expansion.

Why was City Utilities initially considering cost-sharing with Google on part of the culvert replacement expense?

The culvert was fully owned by City Utilities and had already been identified as needing replacement. When Google offered to coordinate construction and initially share in the cost of replacing the culvert, City Utilities planned to reimburse its share of the portion related to its owned infrastructure. However, Google ultimately chose to pay the full cost of replacing City Utilities' failing culvert, eliminating the need for City Utilities to seek reimbursement approval from City Council.

Does City Utilities fund portions of developer projects?

No. City Utilities' long-standing policy is that ***growth pays for growth***. Private developers — whether hospitals, manufacturers, housing developments or technology companies — pay for and construct the public infrastructure required to connect their development to the system. Once completed, that infrastructure is inspected, accepted and becomes part of City Utilities' public system if the infrastructure benefits existing customers or can be utilized or extended to serve or benefit other future customers in the area. Google's project adheres to that same policy.



Photo showing the deteriorated condition of a large-diameter culvert pipe under Adams Center Road. The bottom right area and a close-up view, marked by arrows, show metal that has worn completely through, with soil entering the pipe as it begins to collapse.