

MINUTES OF MEETING

MAIN STREET-MCVAY TRANSIT STUDY GOVERNANCE TEAM

March 15, 2016

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on March 11, 2016, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Main Street-McVay Transit Study Governance Team held a meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2016, beginning at 3:00 p.m., in the Jesse Maine Room at Springfield City Hall, 225 N. 5th Avenue, Springfield, Oregon.

Present:

Governance Team:

Mayor Christine Lundberg, City of Springfield
Councilor Marilee Woodrow, City of Springfield
Frannie Brindle, Oregon Department of Transportation
Angelynn Pierce, Lane Transit District Board of Directors
Don Nordin, Lane Transit District Board of Directors
Gino Grimaldi, City of Springfield (Ex Officio)
A. J. Jackson, Lane Transit District (Ex Officio)

Project Management Staff:

Tom Boyatt, City of Springfield
Emma Newman, City of Springfield
Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District
Sasha Luftig, Lane Transit District

Consultants:

Lynda Wannamaker, Wannamaker Consulting, Inc.
Stefano Viggiano, Parsons Brinckerhoff

Others:

Gary Wildish, Lane Transit District Board of Directors
Brian Barnett, City of Springfield

1. WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Mayor Lundberg called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. Those present introduced themselves.

2. PROJECT PHASE 2 UPDATE

Process/Schedule/Outreach

Ms. Wannamaker presented the Phase 2 updates to the Governance Team (GT). In December staff received direction from the GT that revised the scope of work from summer 2015. Staff began the technical work in January. The focus of Phase 2, which started in January, has been

to design, evaluate, and review options. This will be repeated until a locally preferred solution is agreed upon. The design specifics will be used to inform the decision-making process. Working with property and business owners to develop solutions to avoid and reduce potential impacts is critical to the process, as is keeping the broader community informed while working toward identifying a locally preferred solution.

3. DESIGN OPTIONS OVERVIEW

East of 20th/West of 20th/McVay Highway

Mr. Viggiano presented the design options overview to the GT. The No-change option would be a continuation of the current service span. This option is typically carried forward to form a baseline for all of the other options. He provided an overview of all the design options, which will be covered in more detail later in the meeting.

Mayor Lundberg requested that the pedestrian graphic within the cross-sections, which could be interpreted as depicting a person on a cell phone, be changed in subsequent materials.

A Main Street/BRT design option was put forth. This would include an eastward expansion of the Franklin EmX with a terminus at the Thurston Station. He noted that selected trips may extend to Thurston High School, and/or would include a neighborhood connector service east of 58th Street. Transit signal priority and roundabout intersection designs were included within the range of options presented. There would be 1/3-mile stop spacing. West of 20th Street there are four routing and lane options. East of 20th Street there are a variety of lane options to consider, and this design option includes multi-modal improvements.

The next design option to consider is the McVay Highway BRT option. The route would begin at Springfield Station and end at Nugget Way, and could possibly be a southern extension of the Gateway EmX, with stations near 19th Street and Nugget Way. The existing transit signal priority at the McVay Highway and Franklin Boulevard intersection would already have been converted to roundabouts as part of the New Franklin Boulevard project, and there are a couple of lane options with the McVay designs that include additional roundabouts as well as multi-modal improvements.

4. MAIN STREET EAST (EAST OF 20TH STREET)

Design Options: No Change and Enhanced Corridor

Design Option A1: Mixed Traffic - Right Lane, 10-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option A2: Mixed Traffic - Right Lane, 7-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option A3: Mixed Traffic - Right Lane, 7-ft. Sidewalks and 8-ft Median

Design Option B1: Mixed Traffic - Left Lane, 10-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option B2: Mixed Traffic - Left Lane, 7-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft. Median

Design Option B3: Mixed Traffic - Left Lane, 7-ft. Sidewalks and 8-ft Median

Design Option C: Mr. Viggiano explained that BAT lanes are similar to those on Pioneer Parkway East and West, and this results in a wider cross section, current right-of-way.

Design Option C1: BAT Lanes – 10-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option C2: BAT Lanes - 7-ft Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option C3: BAT Lanes - 7- ft. Sidewalks and 8-ft Median

Design Option D: No-Frills option

Design Option D1: Median Transit Lanes – 10-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft. Median

Design Option D2: Median Transit Lanes – 7-ft. Sidewalks and 12-ft Median

Design Option D3: Median Transit Lanes – 7-ft. Sidewalks and 8-ft Median

Design Option D4: Median Transit Lanes without Multi-Modal Improvements

For Main Street: Mr. Viggiano described four main lane configurations with options A, B, and C, with three variations on each. All of these include medians, landscape strips, and a separated bike zone. The design options have varying widths of sidewalks. The variations with roundabout intersections include 8-foot-wide medians instead of 12-foot wide medians since the left-turn lane widening would not be required due to the roundabout configuration.

Mr. Nordin asked for more specifics on the way the bike lanes would be configured, asking if the bike lanes would just be lines on the street. Mr. Viggiano replied that the bike lanes could be designed in many ways; however, the details have not been developed yet.

Mr. Barnett added that there are numerous options in how bike lanes could be configured, but this was beyond the scope of today's meeting discussion.

Ms. Brindle asked how the BRT works in mixed traffic--specifically asking about Figure 20. Mr. Viggiano answered that if it is a bus and turning traffic lane, that is called a BAT lane, and that there are BAT lane and median lane options.

Mr. Viggiano explained that option C is a BAT lane; and in this case, they will widen the street in both directions, adding a lane similar to Pioneer Parkway East and West.

With the last group of four options, the D options have the same sidewalk and median widths as the others; and again, the bus would travel in an exclusive left lane not shared with vehicles. There also is an option that just has median lanes.

Ms. Pierce asked what specific features would separate the bus lane and bike zone. Mr. Viggiano replied that there are different options, but there may be a 2-foot buffer.

Mr. Viggiano explained that the D option, with median transit lanes, is where the bus travels in an exclusive left lane and needs between 116 and 126 feet of right-of-way. He added that there also is a "No Frills" option.

Ms. Brindle asked how passengers would get on and off the bus. Mr. Viggiano replied that stations would need to be added and streets would need to be widened to provide space for platforms as well as bus docking. The streets would have to be widened by at least 20 to 30 feet at stations. The assumption is that wherever there is a median station, there would be some kind of controlled crossing such as a rapid flashing yellow beacon.

Ms. Brindle asked for clarification on the options that have the median with transit lanes, asking if those would be widened as well. She asked if the BAT lanes could be widened as well, to which Mr. Viggiano replied, "Yes."

Mr. Grimaldi observed that it was an impressive list of options. He asked about bicycle facilities, specifically asking if including a tree corridor separating combined pedestrian and bicycle traffic from automobile and bus traffic was an option. Mr. Viggiano stated that it was not currently an option, but it could be. He shared that International Way in Springfield is designed this way but with a high amount of pedestrian and bike traffic; this option may not be as desirable.

Ms. Pierce stated that she would rather see physical barriers between bikes, pedestrians, and cars as much as possible. Mr. Viggiano stated with a 9-foot bike zone, this is possible.

Mr. Boyatt expressed that part of the challenge with a barrier is that every driveway has to go through that barrier.

Mr. Viggiano stated that a high level assessment was completed and the key factors were: capital cost, operating cost, transit travel time, property impacts, and safety impacts. The Consultant Team recommendation was to not advance a BAT Lane or a Median Transit Lane. The traffic analysis only improved travel time by one minute. On Main Street, traffic congestion is not currently an issue with buses. BRT improvements that use transit priority signals, he said, were doing a good job in reducing delay along existing EmX corridors. The recommendation is to advance the options that have a narrower right-of-way--the A and B groups primarily. The "No Change" option also is forwarded.

GT Discussion and Direction:

Mayor Lundberg stated that she agrees with Mr. Grimaldi that the trees should get moved closer to the middle of the street so that the bikes and pedestrians are further separated from automobile traffic.

Mr. Boyatt asked if the trees were moved and the bike and pedestrian zone was on the inside, would there be some vertical separation. Mr. Barnett clarified that the bike and pedestrian zones would be at two different elevations. Ms. Newman described that with the bike zone and the pedestrian zone, it would need to be clear which zone was for which service. Mayor Lundberg remarked that this would address the bigger concern of bikes and pedestrians.

The Mayor asked for the GT members to comment on their preferences.

Ms. Brindle from ODOT stated that she preferred figures 19 and 22.

Mr. Viggiano stated that those options were "no-frill."

Mayor Lundberg stated her concern about the impact on Thurston High School students crossing Main Street to get to the Thurston Station. She added that she also does not want to see extra time for commuter traffic.

Mr. Viggiano explained that the current recommendation being studied was to extend a few trips to Thurston High School to alleviate the issue of high school students crossing Main Street. There also is a neighborhood connector bus that could provide service. Mr. Viggiano stated there would still be 10-minute service.

Ms. Pierce asked if median transit lanes take into account trying to get more destination trips in the area between 20th and 42nd streets. Mr. Viggiano said that the assessment was high level; and as the project progresses, staff will be able to get more detailed information.

Ms. Pierce expressed that she would still like one option with Median Transit Lanes. Her preferences are 19, 22, and 28.

Mayor Lundberg stated that they will have to forward the "No Change" (NC) option, but could advance 19, 22, and 28.

Councilor Woodrow stated that she is fine with NC, 19, 22, and 28.

Ms. Brindle asked Mr. Viggiano if during the high level assessment, they had car travel time considerations, and did they also consider truck traffic considerations. He said that no analysis was done for trucks separately from car travel in the high level assessment.

Mr. Barnett fielded questions about multiple options regarding bicycle traffic within multiple design options.

Mayor Lundberg stated that they will need to eliminate the opportunity to do dumb things, but rather, educate people. She stated her support for narrowing the list, and she moved for NC, 16, 19, 22, and 28.

Mr. Schwetz commented that from a project management standpoint, sometimes narrowing it down too much limits choices later.

Ms. Wannamaker stated that there is quite a bit of variation with this list. They would work with Mr. Barnett to talk about bicycle elements and the design options to accommodate people biking and walking. Mr. Viggiano stated there would be further opportunity for design changes; this is focusing but not limiting design options.

The GT recommended 16, 19, 22, and 28 to go forward.

5. MAIN STREET/ SOUTH A STREET ROUTE ALIGNMENT

Design Option A: 5th Street Crossover

Design Option B: 10th Street Crossover (Phase 1 Recommended Alignment)

Design Option C: 14th Street Crossover

Design Option D: Two-Way South A Street

Team Recommendation to advance: Options C and D.

Mr. Viggiano explained that this piece was a routing decision. There are four route alignment options, and he explained the different routes. Option B requires a contraflow lane; transit only. Option C is similar with a longer contraflow. Option D is a full contraflow lane on South A Street. The assessment showed transit travel time was a bit faster with a longer contraflow lane.

GT Discussion and Direction:

Mr. Boyatt explained why staff recommended Options C and D to advance.

Mayor Lundberg discussed her concern for contraflow traffic and explained how the pedestrian and traffic safety issues on Pioneer Parkway have been a learning curve for pedestrians.

Mr. Viggiano stated that this also was a big concern when LTD built the Franklin corridor near campus because the most dangerous time, safety-wise, is directly after something new first goes in.

Councilor Woodrow declared her preference for option D.

Ms. Pierce also indicated preference for option D but that she would like to see option C advance as well. She stated her belief that it may inspire development.

Mr. Nordin asked on which side of the street passengers would board. Mr. Viggiano stated that it could be on either side due to the EmX bus double-door design.

The GT recommended moving forward with Design options C and D.

6. MAIN STREET WEST (WEST OF 20TH STREET)

Design Option: No Change and Enhanced Corridor

Design Option A: BRT in Mixed Traffic

Design Option B: BAT Lane- Parking Removed

Design Option C: BAT Lane- Parking Retained

Design Option D: BAT Lane- Angle Parking

Team Recommendation to Advance: No Change, Enhanced Corridor, Option A: BRT Mixed Traffic, and Option B: BAT Lane - Parking Removed.

Mr. Viggiano said that Main Street West with Option A, BRT in mixed traffic, refers to the area between 14th and 20th streets only due to the previous GT decision. The mixed-traffic option includes a landscape strip and a wider bike facility. With the second option, the BAT lane replaces parking on the South side of the street.

Mr. Viggiano highlighted Figure 11, stating that widening the street by adding a BAT lane serves the bus and left turning traffic. The issue is having an EmX lane next to parallel parking traffic, and this option is not much faster than mixed traffic. With the BAT lane on the South side option, there could be angled parking on one side; but that would mean a loss of 20 percent of the parking spaces and would require the widest right-of-way.

Staff recommend carrying forward the options with the narrowest right-of-way: NC, Enhanced Corridor, BRT Mixed Traffic, and BAT Lane – Parking Removed.

GT Discussion and Direction:

Ms. Pierce restated her desire to make sure bicycle safety is addressed. Mayor Lundberg agreed. Mr. Viggiano said that there could be multiple options with bicycle safety improvements.

Councilor Woodrow stated that removing south side parking is ideal as no one parks there.

Mayor Lundberg asked if the Team wanted figures 8, 9, and 10 to move forward.

Ms. Pierce recommended option 10. Ms. Brindle asked if figure 10 would fit.

Ms. Newman said that by adopting some of these options, it could deviate from the City's adopted parking plan; but that could be changed. She stated that based on a few observations, on average, only three to six cars are parked in this span within a three-block area.

Mayor Lundberg initiated a discussion about parking options and working with business owners who may lose parking.

Mayor Lundberg moved to advance figure 8, the NC option, and figures 9 and 10 to go forward.

Ms. Wannamaker reiterated that at the next level, there will still be a lot of flexibility.

The GT recommended Figures 8, 9, and 10 to move forward.

7. SOUTH A STREET

Design Option: No-Change (NC) and Enhanced Corridor

Design Option E: Transit-Only Contraflow Lane

Design Option F: Eastbound BAT Lane

Team Recommendations to Advance: No Change, Enhanced Corridor, Design Option E: Transit-only Contraflow Lane, and Design Option F: BAT Lane Eastbound.

Mr. Viggiano presented the Contraflow Lane, and the Transit-Only Contraflow Lane, Option E. that would require minimal widening. The South A option depends on the route option.

GT Discussion and Direction:

The GT recommended taking Enhanced Corridor off and advancing NC, and Design options E and F.

8. MCVAY HIGHWAY

Design Option: No Change

Design Option A: Mixed-Traffic BRT

Design Option B: BAT Lanes

Team Recommendations to Advance: No Change, Design Option A: BRT Mixed-Lane, and Design Option B: BAT lanes.

Mr. Viggiano described Option A as supporting mixed traffic BRT, which would widen the existing 60-foot conditions to 74 feet wide. There is not much development now, but it is an opportunity to add something before there is a lot of development.

GT Discussion and Direction:

Mr. Boyatt explained that Union Pacific has federal pre-emption, and does not have to comply with city, state, or federal law; and there is not a lot of choice with that. It is assumed that there will likely not be a wider space under the trestle. He added that it was difficult to find out where the railroad is in the process of replacing the trestle, but it was assumed that there would be an hourglass type of bottleneck.

Ms. Brindle asked if the City had possibly explored a TIGER grant. Mr. Boyatt responded that they were actually looking at a *ConnectOregon* grant, but the process was in the very early stages.

Mr. Schwetz relayed his conversation with federal officials regarding the question of whether or not the City would be eligible for federal transit funding if exclusive lanes and transit signal priority were not included. For Small Starts grants, the saving on travel times that can be had, on say, a roundabout, is improved over existing conditions. This is good news and could potentially provide a competitive design for funding.

Ms. Pierce asked if safety would be weighed in the FTA funding process. Mr. Schwetz stated that staff would look at that.

Mayor Lundberg said that she would like consideration of carbon emissions, which tend to be less with a roundabout. She also asked for clarification about p. 47, 5.2.3 of the full report and wondered if that needed a correction as the first bullet point didn't read clearly. Mr. Viggiano clarified.

Ms. Brindle stated as a disclaimer that ODOT will not maintain vegetation in a corridor due to a limited maintenance budget, but that there may be a state grant-funded program for drought tolerant plants that the City may be interested in.

Mayor Lundberg stated that there are creative ways to handle those issues to maintain vegetation.

The GT recommended No Change, and Design Options A and B.

9. NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Wannamaker described the next steps. They will reach out to significantly affected business and property owners fronting the corridor, with letters out by Monday. Mayor Lundberg stated she would like folks impacted to have a map included in the letter so they can visually see what kind of impact the options may have. The Mayor also suggested that the worst case scenario be shared, with copies of the letter and enclosures to all county commissioners and city council members. She said that she would like the specific and not the schematic clearly defining the impacts now.

Ms. Wannamaker reviewed the following:

March 16-18: Identify property and business owners with potential significant impacts and mail letters.

March 28: Open House announcements: e-mail, postcards, and website.

April 6-10: Property and business owner outreach: face-to-face meetings; design solutions.

April 11-12: Open Houses; design solutions meetings with property and business owners.

May 16: City Council Work Session: review owner input, design solutions.

May 18: LTD Work Session: review owner input and design solutions.

May 26: GT Meeting No. 2: review owner input, design solutions, Council and Board feedback; provide Team direction.

May-June: Design Refinement and Evaluation.

June 21: GT Meeting No. 3: Preliminary LPS Determination

Late June: Property and Business Owner Outreach; Open Houses.

Mid-July: City Council/LTD Board Work Sessions: review and feedback.

September 6: GT Meeting No. 4: Locally Preferred Solution recommendations.

October 3: City Council Hearing: select LPS.

Mayor Lundberg confirmed that staff had sufficient direction to move forward.

Mayor Lundberg adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.