



MEMORANDUM

COOLPPL Meeting #3 Summary

St. Helens Riverfront Connector Plan

DATE 6/13/2018
TO Project Management Team
FROM Matt Hastie and Andrew Parish, Angelo Planning Group
CC

Meeting Date: June 12, 2018

Meeting Time: 2:00 PM, St. Helens City Hall

Attendees:

- Rick Scholl, City of St Helens (Absent)
- Jacob Graichen, City of St. Helens
- Neal Sheppard, City of St. Helens (Absent)
- Lonny Welter, Columbia County Road Department (Absent)
- Scott Jensen, Port of St. Helens
- John Walsh, City of St. Helens
- Jenny Dimsho, City of St. Helens
- Sue Nelson, City of St. Helens (Absent)
- Julie Stenberg, St. Helens Planning Commission
- Andrew Parish, Angelo Planning Group
- Andrew Holder, Greenworks
- Mike Faha, Greenworks
- Matt Bell, Kittelson Associates
- Krista Purser, Kittelson Associates
- Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group
- Michael Duncan, ODOT

AGENDA ITEM 1: STATUS REPORT AND MEETING OBJECTIVES

Jenny introduced the meeting and thanked participants for taking the time to review these design options with us.

Matt Hastie discussed the project timeline and laid out the agenda for the meeting. Once we have had today's three meetings we will be evaluating these design options in a later memo. Today we are interested in the community's opinions and first impressions of these options. Later on we will be narrowing possibilities after evaluation.

We have early conceptual thoughts on intersection design, cross sections, and wayfinding.

Our next meeting will likely be in early September, which will include reviewing and recommending preferred options.

Matt introduced the project study area and invited comments as they come throughout the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 2: DESIGN OPTIONS

Andrew Holder walked through the design options of segments within the study area. In some cases, there was only one option identified. Andrew's comments are described for each section, followed a summary of questions and discussion.

Segment 1: South 1st Street (existing)

- The recommended option is very similar to today's cross section. The goal is to keep on-street parking that is there already.
- Added "sharrows" are recommended for bicycle facilities here. Low speeds downtown allow this.
- The design includes a sidewalk and landscaping strip, which is expected to be a combination of tree wells and street furniture.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - Today there is a turnaround at the end of the cross section - will drivers be able to turn around in the future? *Response: There will be additional streets, including an extension of The Strand and likely Tualatin street, which will give drivers travel options. The final layout of these streets will depend on future development.*
 - What about a roundabout? *Response: This might make some sense along the waterfront, but likely is not necessary given the configuration and operation at this intersection.*

Segment 2.1: South 1st Street (Future) / Plymouth Street (Future)

- A gateway feature is proposed somewhere in Segment 2.1, depending on future development. A likely location would be at the intersection (location to be determined) where 1st St. transitions to Plymouth St. The location of the change in street names from 1st Street to Plymouth is yet to be determined.
- The recommended road cross section is the design proposed in the waterfront framework plan. This is similar to TSP collector standard, which includes bike lanes, and differs by

including parallel parking and wider landscape strips/stormwater treatment and sidewalks. Wider landscape strips/stormwater treatment/sidewalks.

- This area will likely have street furnishings and pedestrian-oriented lighting.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - The first transportation improvements on the waterfront site will likely be from Tualatin to Strand, not a full north-south connection.
 - Discussion of environmental issues on the former industrial site. Brownfields have a cap requirement. Need to discuss with City engineering staff about the specifics of this issue. Facilities here will typically not be infiltration.

Segment 2.2: Plymouth Street (Existing)

- There are significant constraints in the width along this corridor, where existing Plymouth street passes the treatment plant.
- The options shown are minimum and maximum width. The difference is the landscape strip.
- To save space, these designs show a downhill “sharrow”, and an uphill shared-use path.
- Questions/Discussion
 - How did you choose which side of the road the path is on? *Response: We looked at connections to the Nob Hill Park trails and other bike/ped facilities proposed in other segments to choose the north side for the path. We also think slower bicyclist speeds going uphill better lend themselves to a shared pedestrian/bicycle path traveling uphill while faster bicyclist speeds going downhill better allow for bicyclists to mix with vehicles in this direction.*
 - Could do a broader renaming for the area, i.e. “Columbia Loop,”

Intersection: Old Portland Rd and South 6th

- Two options shown define the intersection and roadway better. Option A is full access, option B is right-in-right-out along 6th.

Segment 3: Plymouth Street to Old Portland Road

- This segment also has topographic constraints shown on the map.
- Option A is very similar to standard TSP collector section. However, landscape strips are removed. There is only room for a sidewalk on the south side of the street between 8th and 10th.
- Option B shows a sharrow the south side lane and a shared-use path on the north side, similar to the proposed section in 2.2. A sidewalk is shown on the south side of the street only between 8th and 10th; there is not enough room elsewhere.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - There may be room to grow the multi-use path, particularly if we can reduce travel lanes. They’re 12’ now because this is a freight route – it might make sense to remove that designation and create narrower lanes. If the industrial land on the waterfront is rezoned, that may be a justification for narrower lanes.

Intersection: Old Portland Road & Plymouth Street

- Option A: Right now, spacing standards are not met. This option doesn't meet mobility standards but might be an interim solution.
- Option B: Realigns Old Portland and makes Plymouth the primary route.
- Option C: Large roundabout that provides equal emphasis on Plymouth and Old Portland.
- Option D: Smaller four-legged roundabout emphasizes Old Portland.
- With all of these options, there are property impacts. Some options impact more properties than others. We will be taking a closer look at those and other impacts as part of our next steps.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - Matt asked for comments. Committee members said the cul-de-sac on 14th is good, and recommended doing that sooner rather than later. Members voiced support of Option D over other options – lesser impacts to property owners.
 - Don't try to minimize property impacts necessarily at the expense of having a fully functional facility.
 - When thinking about a roundabout you start to move beyond strict mobility considerations. Are we considering constructing a “parkway” facility in this area? If not, some of these options may create unreasonable expectations given that the ROW is constrained.
 - Ultimately, a preferred approach will have to be a balance of our various goals and objectives.
 - This is about halfway to the waterfront – a good location for a gateway/wayfinding.

Segment 4.1 – Old Portland to Gable Road

- Option A is the existing minor arterial section from the TSP, which includes bike lanes, landscape strips, and sidewalks. Having bicyclists adjacent to moving traffic at high speeds leads to a high level of traffic stress.
- Option B takes both bike lanes and one sidewalk from the roadway and puts them in a 12' multi-use path. There is plenty of space in this segment for the wider path.
- Option C includes a two-way cycletrack on the north side of the road, meaning that bicycles don't mix with pedestrians.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - We see people biking in this area currently, but it's dangerous and you see close calls all the time.
 - Some committee members expressed a preference for Option B, given that the cycletrack would be tricky to transition to/from at either end.

Segment 4.2 – Gable Road to Hwy 30

- This segment has more ROW than in segment 4.1. The three potential options are similar to the options of 4.1, but include an additional landscaped median or center turn lane or turn lane pockets.

- Option A is standard TSP section with an additional median.
- Option B includes the shared-use path on one side.
- Option C has a cycletrack on one side.
- There are recently constructed half-street improvements along this section. Any option we choose should mesh with that as much as possible to avoid having to reconstruct those improvements.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - We see people biking in this area currently, but it's dangerous and you see close calls all the time.
 - Some committee members expressed a preference for Option B, given that the cycletrack would be tricky to transition to/from at either end.

Intersection: Old Portland and Kaster

- There is a basic intersection there today that will not support future traffic volumes. No pedestrian actuation and lots of pavement.
- Option A: Standard intersection with turn lanes
- Option B: Roundabout

Intersection: Old Portland and Railroad

- This area has closely-spaced intersections, resulting in heavy delays and poor operations in the future.
- Option A provides a three-lane cross section allowing left turns, but this is problematic due to the railroad.
- Option B relocates Railroad Avenue to align with Port Ave, with a signalized intersection
- Option C is the same as Option B, with stop-control. This necessitates a three-lane cross section. (This is generally true for all intersections in this segment – they either require a signal or a two-stage left turn pocket).

Intersection: Old Portland and Gable Road

- Option A: Gable Road T's into Old Portland, resulting in lots of left turns onto Old Portland.
- Option B Stop control on Old Portland; Gable continues through like today. Two-stage left turn onto Gable.

Intersection: Gable and McNulty

- The primary improvement here is the addition of left turn pockets.

Intersection: US30 and Gable

- This intersection is different from today in that it includes a right turn lane on the westbound approach on Gable Road, resulting in increased capacity and better bicycle safety.
- Questions/Discussion:

- The intersection is still projected to fail (experience long delays) with future traffic volumes.
- There are changes we can make to analyze the intersection in different ways (alternative mobility standards). But ultimately it means greater congestion. Widening the intersection means more lanes for bikes/peds to cross, and much more money. Railroad crossing changes are problematic and expensive as well.

Segment 5 – Secondary Study Area

- This is the “alternate route” to the riverfront using the Millard Rd intersection. This secondary study area was not studied in as much detail as the others in terms of road cross-section alternatives.
- The potential to realign Millard to create a more direct connection is included in the Transportation System Plan (TSP), but not in great detail.
- The Old Portland Road proposed cross section is same as in 4.1 (multi use path on north side). The TSP suggested multi use path on the South side; we recommend shifting this to the north side to connect with other segments.

Intersection: Millard and Old Portland

- This improvement involves a slight realignment of the intersection to support truck movements as a potential near-term improvement.

Intersection: Millard and US30

- This is similar to the proposed signalized intersection that ODOT is planning currently. We have added turn lanes on Millard to decrease delay given future traffic volumes.
- Questions/Discussion:
 - The analysis has pretty aggressive growth assumptions based in part on modeling approved by ODOT; those assumptions may overestimate traffic and congestion levels.
 - We are still seeing operational issues here with the ODOT plans. Our concept is the same as ODOT’s on US 30 but different on Millard.

AGENDA ITEM 3: NEIGHBORHOOD, PUBLIC AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

We have additional meetings later in the day but they will be shorter, with less time available to present the same information. How might we better convey this information in less time?

- It’s basically triage.
- People are most interested in downtown, less emphasis on the later items. It might be okay if we don’t make it to the later segments.
- Mention the extension of The Strand in future meetings and documents.

- The City is in negotiations on an agreement with a developer for a hotel, residential buildings, and mixed use in the Riverfront area. The hotel and some of the residential development would be in the first phase of construction.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CITIZEN COMMENTS

No non-committee members were present.

AGENDA ITEM 5: NEXT STEPS

Matt reviewed upcoming schedule items. We will be evaluating these options in detail and providing recommendations. Following that will be a detailed implementation step, and then adoption.