

State Street Transit and Traffic Operational Plan Meeting #2 Summary September 9, 2010

MEETING OBJECTIVES

The State Street Transit and Traffic Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met for the second time on Sept. 9, 2010. The purpose of the meeting was to present and gather input on:

- The criteria that will be used to evaluate alternatives
- The proposed alternatives

This document summarizes the presentations, discussion and comments from the meeting.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

- Gary Allen, Givens Pursley
- Dave Angell, Idaho Power
- Jeanne Barker, Garden City Planning and Zoning
- Jon Cecil, CCDC
- Ester Ceja, Collister Neighborhood Association
- Eric Davis, Retail West
- Joel Ellsworth, Garden City Police
- Daren Fluke, JUB Engineers
- John Franden, ACHD
- Sheri Freemuth, National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Brooke Green, CTAI
- David Greene, Boise Schools – Riverglen
- Chris Hansen, House of Brokers Inc
- Ryan Head, ACHD
- Chris Hendrickson, Berkeley - Bike Commuter
- Rob Howarth, Central District Health
- Vicki Smith, Hewlett-Packard
- Brian Huffaker, Hawkins Companies
- George Iliff, Colliers International
- Julie Klocke, Collister Neighborhood Association
- George C. Knight, Bike Advisory Committee, ACHD
- Lou Landry, Citizen
- Jeff Lowe, City of Eagle
- Susan Mason, Boise State University
- Sherry McKibben, University of Idaho
- Don Matson, COMPASS
- Fr. David Moser, St. Seraphim Orthodox Church
- David Moser, City of Boise
- Jim Neill, Garden City Planning and Zoning
- Jerry Nielson, Garden City
- Wendie Slater, Alliance Title
- Andrea Tuning, City of Boise
- Jay Walker, Brighton Corporation
- Mark Wasdahl, ITD – District 3
- Deanna Watson, BCAC Housing Authority

PROJECT TEAM ATTENDANCE

- Sabrina Anderson, ACHD
- Kelli Fairless, Valley Regional Transit
- Fred Kitchener, McFarland Management
- Kathleen Lacey, City of Boise
- Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates
- John Ringert, Kittelson & Associates
- Katie Pincus, Kittelson & Associates
- Ed Myers, Kittelson & Associates
- Eric Lindstrom, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.
- John Cullerton, URS
- Rosemary Curtin, RBCI

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- Meeting Evaluation Sheet
- PowerPoint
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Fact Sheet
- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes Fact Sheet
- Map of segments
- Segment 1 cross-section
- Segment 2 cross-section
- Segment 3 cross-section
- Evaluation of Alternatives
- Segment 1 comment sheet (Green)
- Segment 2 comment sheet (Yellow)
- Segment 3 comment sheet (Blue)
- Segment 4 comment sheet (Purple)

MEETING AGENDA AND SUMMARY

Welcome

- Rosemary Curtin, RBCI opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their participation. She reviewed the:
 - Meeting agenda and materials
 - Comments received during CAC Meeting #1
 - Results from the electronic survey

Alternatives – Overview and Evaluation Criteria

- Andy Daleiden, Kittelson & Associates provided the committee with an overview of:
 - Where the project team is in the study
 - Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) systems
 - Corridor operations including future traffic and transit conditions
 - The alternatives being considered for improving the corridor
- John Cullerton, URS also provided information to the committee.

Questions/Answers from Committee Members

How many businesses/driveways per mile are located on this corridor? How would an HOV lane work on State Street with the current access points?

The number of existing businesses/driveways/public streets per mile located on State Street is provided below:

- 9th Street to 23rd Street – 64 access points per mile
- 23rd Street to Glenwood Street – 63 access points per mile
- Glenwood Road to Eagle Road – 27 access points per mile
- Eagle Road to SH 16 – 13 access points per mile

For the entire corridor between 9th Street and SH 16, the access point density is approximately 35 access points per mile.

The SR 99 HOV project in Kent and Federal Way, Washington has approximately 44 access points per mile. The Highway 97 HOV project in Kelowna, B.C. has approximately 29 access points per mile.

Pacific Highway South (SR 99) HOV Lane Project - *The Pacific Highway South (SR 99) HOV Lane Project began in 1996 and has been developed over several phases to implement HOV lanes on a 14-mile section of the principal arterial connecting the cities of Kent, Federal Way, and Tukwila, Washington, located to the south of Seattle. The project has included corridor improvements, such as raised median, lighting, underground utilities, streetscaping, transit signal priority, sidewalks, bus bays, and several other treatments. The arterial includes 4 general-purpose lanes and 2 curbside HOV lanes and carries approximately 30,000 to 35,000 vehicles per day. The HOV lanes operate all day and allow buses, carpools (2+), bicycles, and right-turn traffic to and from the businesses and at intersections. This corridor has many characteristics similar to the State Street corridor, in particular, the many jurisdictions (cities and state agencies) that have been involved over the last 20 years to develop and build the HOV corridor.*

Highway 97 HOV Lane Project - *The Highway 97 HOV lane project was completed in 2009. This project consists of a 7-lane arterial with HOV lanes located in the curbside, outer lane in Kelowna, British Columbia. This project spanned approximately 4 miles of the highway and included many corridor improvements, such as raised median, lighting, underground utilities, streetscaping, transit signal priority, sidewalks, bus bays, and several other treatments. The arterial includes 4 general-purpose lanes and 2 curbside HOV lanes and carries approximately 40,000 to 50,000 vehicles per day. The HOV lanes operate all day and allow buses, carpools (2+), bicycles, motorcycles, and right-turn traffic to and from the businesses and at intersections. This corridor currently has a major transit route, which is planned to be converted to a bus rapid transit service in the near future. The bus rapid transit service will operate in the curbside HOV lanes with bus pullouts, as the existing transit service currently operates today.*

The access along the SR 99 and Highway 97 corridors are similar to the current segment of State Street between Veterans Memorial Parkway and Glenwood Street. These projects have implemented a raised median and restricted some accesses to right-in/right-out only and some to right-in/right-out/left-in driveways. U-turn maneuvers at signalized intersections are also part of the access management. These two existing HOV corridors have some of the similar characteristics to State Street, such as commuter and local traffic, major arterials with many signalized intersections, and a mix of residential and commercial businesses located on the corridor.

How can people access driveways with the curbside running way with HOV lanes?

Right turns can use the curbside transit lane to turn into and out of a business or turn at a signalized intersection. Striping is used to indicate locations where these maneuvers are encouraged or discouraged. Enforcement is a challenge that can be addressed through a specific enforcement program, such as the HERO self-enforcement hotline in Seattle. Seattle has regulations regarding how long a vehicle can stay in the lane. Currently two-way-left-turn lanes have similar regulations regarding how a vehicle can use them and are enforced by local law enforcement effectively.

The HERO program is an HOV outreach program established and maintained by WSDOT in 1984. This program is used to educate HOV and HOT lane violators and ferry line cutters on the purpose, rules, and benefits of these freeway lanes and ferry lines. The program was started in 1984 as a way to encourage drivers to self-enforce HOV lane rules. It is now a nationally recognized program which has served as a role model for similar programs in other states.

How does the HERO program work? Drivers can report HOV, HOT lane, or ferry line violators online or by calling at 1-877-764-HERO. WSDOT then mails educational materials about HOV, HOT lane, and

ferry line usage to the registered owner of the vehicle that was seen in violation. First-time HOV lane violators are sent an educational brochure. Second-time HOV lane violators are sent a letter from WSDOT. Third-time HOV lane violators are sent a letter from the Washington State Patrol. An HOV lane violation ticket costs \$124.

Why is a curbside running way better than a median running way? Most locations use curbside.

What is the advantage of each running way?

Each running way has certain advantages and disadvantages that will be discussed in the remainder of the presentation and during the breakout sessions.

What percentage of total vehicle trips can be expected to use the HOV lanes? What is the expected volume in the HOV lanes per hour per lane?

HOV lanes operate well with 200 to 400 vehicles per lane, which equates to roughly 400 to 800 occupants depending on the average occupancy. With an assumed 1,600 vehicles in the peak hour in a single-occupancy vehicle (non-HOV) lane, 800 vehicles would be needed in an HOV lane to equal the number of person trips in the single-occupancy vehicle lane.

If your goals and objectives are to move the most people along the corridor, then HOV lanes are not as beneficial.

HOV lanes increase the number of person trips along the corridor compared to an exclusive transit lane. The HOV lanes bring the number of person trips closer to that of a mixed traffic lane.

In order to know how many person trips would be served by an HOV lane, information is needed about how many of the trips along the corridor are currently made by vehicles with two or more people. The project team has collected limited data on the corridor that shows that approximately 150 vehicles per hour in the peak direction have more than one occupant. This number is within the range where HOV could work effectively with the transit, but it is hard to predict the future usage of these lanes. By implementing HOV lanes and providing a level of outreach to the community, drivers on the corridor may choose not to drive alone in order to use the HOV lane. Such changes in travel behavior would result in an increased usage of the lane compared to the expected usage based on existing occupancy data. The lanes may not fill up now, but in the future the lanes could potentially reach the 200 to 400 vehicles per lane. In order to estimate how many people would use the lane, predictions about travel behavior once the lane has been implemented would need to be made.

Is it possible to implement a median running way with just one lane for transit traveling in the peak direction?

Yes, some of the existing BRT systems (i.e., Eugene and Salt Lake City) have a small segment of a median running way with both directions of BRT vehicles using the single lane. However, this configuration limits the potential amount of service you can provide.

What about an alternative with HOV lanes in the median with a two-way left-turn lane between the two HOV lanes? Left-turning vehicles would cross the HOV lanes but would not drive in them.

We have been exploring the flexibility of a curbside running way for HOV, but HOV lanes in the median can be explored further in this study. This type of operation has limited implementations on arterials due to the many challenges that exist with addressing the HOV through traffic, HOV left-turn traffic, and HOV right-turn traffic at an intersection and the HOV traffic with transit vehicles at bus stops. As mentioned, there are many ways to approach an HOV lane on an arterial.

The left-turn lanes would reduce traffic in the HOV lane but still provide left turn access.

The corridor is listed in the ACHD Capital Improvement Plan for funding to be widened from five to seven lanes between Glenwood Street and 23rd Street. In most of the alternatives, the rest of the corridor is also widened to seven lanes. Within ACHD's jurisdiction, a raised median would be installed when the roadway is widened to seven lanes, eliminating left-out access from unsignalized driveways but providing the ability for right-in/right-out/left-in access at driveways. The curbside running way does not preclude the ability to allow for a right-in/right-out/left-in configuration at an access.

The future right-of-way is identified as 120 feet for this segment, which provides adequate right-of-way to accommodate a curbside or median running way. The necessary right-of-way increases at intersections due to turn lanes and other design elements. Providing left-turn pockets at intersections with median running way HOV lanes could increase the width of the intersection by another lane. The additional width at the intersection would impact pedestrians by increasing the crossing distance.

We have brought the Community Advisory Committee together to generate creative ideas to discuss as we move forward. There is not just one standard approach to providing a running way for BRT or implementing HOV lanes.

Right-in/right-out only access would be very harmful to individual businesses.

Generally, right-in, right-out is considered a negative by most businesses. However, once traffic levels increase to the point that left-turns are troublesome or dangerous, the effects of providing a safer access pattern that creates some out of direction travel tends to be supported by businesses in many situations. Any expansion or significant improvements to the corridor will result in restricted access for most mid-block driveways and minor streets due to the installation of a raised median on State Street. This is because of the safety problems that occur with the two-way-left-turn lane configuration once an arterial is widened beyond five lanes or traffic volumes increase to the point where gaps for left turns are no longer available during the peak hours.

ACHD is currently preparing an alignment study for 120-foot right-of-way for a seven-lane section with a raised median between Glenwood Street and 23rd Street. ACHD will be conducting discussions with businesses as part of the right-of-way discussions. The study will be going to public comment soon.

Some of the State Street TTOP alternatives would likely require more driveway restrictions than others. For this evaluation, the effect on business access was factored in during the alternatives evaluation. The alternatives that would restrict more driveways to right-in/right-out did not score as well within the impacts to businesses category. Each location on the corridor was not individually evaluated at this stage of the analysis. The evaluation was based on the general concept that a five-lane roadway would not have a raised median, and a seven-lane roadway would have a raised median.

What are the criteria for an opening in the median for a left-turn lane or U-turn? How would you access the locations with movements restricted to right-in/right-out?

A vehicle wanting to make a left-turn movement into a driveway that is right-in/right-out only would be directed to make a U-turn at a signalized intersection or nearby median break and then go back to the subject driveway. Key locations along the corridor may allow the left-in movement from the median at an unsignalized intersection. The criteria for providing an opening in the median will be specific to the location and circumstances. All existing signalized intersections would be full access and one or two breaks in the median for left-turns or u-turns would likely be provided between the signalized

intersections. These locations would be determined at the time of the final design and right-of-way acquisition.

Would U-turn opportunities be provided at the mile marker?

Right now the signalized intersections are spaced at one-half mile or less at most of the locations on the east end of the corridor; there are a number of locations where a U-turn maneuver could occur. As mentioned previously, installation of a median would be in conjunction with widening of the intersections, some of which are currently too narrow for U-turns.

This is a 20 to 30 year plan, and land use changes are anticipated along the corridor during that time. The City of Boise is working with Ada County Highway District on an access management plan. A jurisdiction reviewing development applications will examine shared access points between properties to reduce the number of driveways on State Street. If daily traffic volumes on State Street reach the forecast 48,000 vehicles, safe access becomes a problem. Changing policies and development decisions for shared access may be a moot point with future daily traffic volumes since providing full access will be unsafe.

Ada County Highway District is putting the final touches on an alignment study for 120-foot right-of-way under a seven-lane facility between Glenwood Street and 23rd Street. Many existing driveways will be affected. Ada County Highway District will be conducting discussions with businesses as part of the right-of-way discussions. The study will be going to public comment soon.

Are representatives from all of the jurisdictions along the corridor present at this meeting?

All agencies except staff from Garden City are here.

Will all the jurisdictions be working on this? Is there a commitment made by all the jurisdictions? Are they in agreement on the process?

A number of agencies are currently working through a Memorandum of Understanding with COMPASS, Ada County Highway District, City of Boise, City of Eagle, City of Garden City, Idaho Transportation Department, and Valley Regional Transit to work toward an integrated transportation and land use corridor for State Street. The next steps in the new Memorandum of Understanding will outline definite assignments for the jurisdictions. For example, through the existing Memorandum of Understanding, the City of Boise has adopted TOD policy guidelines. The next step is to move into the zoning changes that will help achieve that concentrated development.

Several agencies also worked collaboratively on a Community Challenges grant application for SH 44/State Street, covering the area from downtown Boise to Middleton. There is only \$40 million dollars available nationwide, and over 2,000 applications have been submitted. Through this process, the agencies created a plan for Ada County Highway District to use funds for pedestrian studies and intersections concepts, and for the City of Boise to look at land use needs, etc. The agencies have developed a cohesive plan to get everyone working together.

Questions about safety:

Would the BRT or HOV lanes accommodate school buses?

Yes, school buses could use the exclusive transit or HOV lanes. Coordination among agencies would be needed to discuss specific details about elements including the use of the lane and the use of bus pullouts.

Which one of the alternatives is most beneficial for pedestrian and bicyclist safety?

For pedestrians, there are no significant safety differences between the alternatives. The station in the median as part of the median running way alternative creates a larger area for pedestrians to navigate to when they are crossing the street and could improve the pedestrians' perceptions of crossing the intersection. However, the curbside running way alternative could also include a similar median refuge for pedestrians.

All of the alternatives include bike lanes on the urban section. With the curbside running way and curbside running way with HOV alternatives, bicyclists would be riding alongside a dedicated lane with fewer vehicles than a mixed traffic lane. In the median running way alternative, bicyclists would be riding alongside a mixed traffic lane, as they do on State Street today.

Which has the best safety ratio for car accidents?

Due to the seven-lane cross-sections, a raised median would be implemented with all of the alternatives. The median improves safety by reducing the number of conflicts on the segment. With the median running way alternative, there is no interaction between buses and automobiles on the segments, reducing the exposure to potential crashes. Curbside running way BRT systems have also been implemented without experiencing major safety concerns. Based on a conversation with RTC staff in Las Vegas, the ACE curbside-running BRT has been very positive from a safety perspective, with no known safety issues.

Currently, cars are required to pull into the outer lane when emergency vehicles have their sirens on. Would this be different for any of the running ways?

This would probably not be different for any of the running ways; however, this element would be addressed later as part of the design process.

Background Analysis and Alternatives

Does the 2008 travel demand model take into account the recent higher transit ridership due to increased gas prices?

The transit ridership estimates used for the analysis are based on the data in the regionally approved model, which includes assumptions about fuel prices and many other factors affecting transportation. The ridership data was validated with actual data from Valley Regional Transit, which did include a review of the time period when fuel prices rapidly increased.

What is the percentage of farebox recovery for Valley Regional Transit?

The existing system-wide farebox recovery is approximately 12-14%. The more express services generally have a slightly higher farebox recovery, and the less express services recover less than average.

Are the per capita transit operating costs for the other cities shown as the 2035 numbers in 2008 dollars?

No, the costs for the other cities are shown as 2008 numbers in 2008 dollars. The Low Transit Network and High Transit Network costs are 2035 estimates shown in 2008 dollars.

Without another funding source, none of the alternatives can be implemented. VRT has no capacity to raise additional dollars under current Idaho State Statutes.

Have you calculated the overall capital costs for the different alternatives?

Capital costs will be calculated and available as part of the Implementation Plan.

Discussion of alternatives for each segment (breakout sessions)

- Committee members were divided into three groups. Each group had the opportunity to visit four segment stations. The stations were:
 - Segment 1** - Idaho 16 to Eagle Road
 - Segment 2** - Eagle Road to Glenwood Street
 - Segment 3** - Glenwood Street to 23rd Street
 - Segment 4** - 23rd Street to Downtown Boise Multimodal Center
- A member of the project management team led a discussion at each segment.
- Team members were asked to record their comments.

Below is a summary of the comments received during the breakout sessions.

Segment 1: Idaho 16 to Eagle Road

Do you support the proposed alternative D (Curbside Running Way with HOV) for this segment? Why or why not?

- The majority of participants supported the proposed alternative with minor modifications.
 - This alternative seems to fit the more rural development pattern and has the ability to increase passengers for HOV lanes
 - Of all the segments, HOV may fit better because this segment is the most adaptable
 - Need to establish an adjustable HOV rider requirement
 - Place bike lanes on both sides of the roadway
 - Need landscaping

Other comments:

- BRT would promote more bus ridership
- Cost/benefit analysis doesn't work
- Bike/pedestrian improvements are inadequate, need facilities on both sides of the roadway
- Provide accessibility for people with disabilities
- Add pullouts and parking for transit riders
- Increase safety features for bicyclists at intersections

Segment 2: Eagle Road to Glenwood Street

Do you support one of the three-transit/HOV lane alternatives (B – Median Running Way, C – Curbside Running Way, D – Curbside Running Way with HOV) for this segment? Why or why not?

- Most participants supported alternative D – Curbside Running Way with HOV:
 - Match this segment to Segment 1
 - Need to start with a concept that will transition the community to rapid transit
 - Consider curb, gutter and sidewalks and separated pathways for bikes
 - Consider trees and landscaped medians
 - Add pedestrian and bike facilities on both sides

- Support the alternative because it is optimum potential transit ridership capacity with minimal complexity
- Provides a more efficient use of all 3 lanes
- Allows for more vehicles to use the HOV lane and provides for more room for vehicles to move over for emergency vehicles
- Allows for an exclusive bus lane

- Some respondents liked C – Curbside Running Way and D – Curbside Running Way with HOV if bike lanes and sidewalks were provided on both sides of the roadway.
- A few liked C – Curbside Running Way because as the corridor transitions to a more urbanized development, a more dedicated service seems more appropriate

Other comments:

- Involve businesses
- Consider future transition to light rail in very long term

Segment 3: Glenwood Street to 23rd Street

Do you support the proposed alternative for this segment? Why or why not?

- The majority of participants did support one of the suggested alternatives (B – Median Running Way, C – Curbside Running Way, or D – Curbside Running Way with HOV).
 - Some comments included:
 - Would like to see adequate landscaping
 - Be consistent throughout the corridor
 - Allows more vehicles to use HOV lane
 - Better for transit users and provides flexibility for future changes
 - Like the flexibility of the HOV lane

Other comments:

- Need more landscaping
- Provide easy U-turns at intersections
- Add separated bike paths
- Increase transit
- Add raised median for less accidents, however raised medians are a bad idea for ER
- Let the use of outside lane evolve on its own
- Need to have more flexibility

Segment 4: 23rd Street to Downtown Boise Multimodal Center

1. Do you support combining transit with other traffic in this segment? Why or why not?

- Two participants supported combining transit with other traffic, with one respondent not supporting it

Other comments:

- Given the constrained environment close to downtown a mix or combining of transit with other traffic. This works well in other cities (e.g. Portland), which runs streetcar in traffic through the downtown
- Consider contra flow option from 23rd Street to Downtown Boise MMC; also Jefferson St.
- What about putting transit on Bannock and Idaho dedicated lane to 23rd and 27th?
- Implications to 1-way/2-way street conversion?

Electronic survey results

Below are the results from the forty-two CAC members who completed the survey online.

Five alternatives are being considered to improve the future of State Street. Each alternative includes improvements for bicyclists, motorists, pedestrians and transit.

Alternative A: A five-lane roadway with transit and automobiles using all lanes

Really like or Like	Dislike	Don't Know
15	26	0
36%	63%	0%

Alternative B: A 7-lane roadway with two lanes in the median for transit use only

Really like or Like	Dislike	Don't Know
24	13	3
57%	32%	8%

Alternative C: A 7-lane roadway with two curbside lanes for transit use only

Really like or Like	Dislike	Don't Know
31	9	1
74%	22%	2%

Alternative D: A 7-lane roadway with two curbside high occupancy vehicle lanes

Really like or Like	Dislike	Don't Know
24	15	1
57%	38%	2%

Alternative E: A 7-lane roadway with transit and automobile using all lanes

Really like or Like	Dislike	Don't Know
6	34	1
14%	83%	2%

Several factors will be considered when evaluating possible improvements for State Street. We would like to know what is most important to you.

	<i>Most important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not so important</i>	<i>Least Important</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
Improvements should increase transit ridership	25	10	3	2	2
	60%	24%	8%	5%	5%
Improvements should accommodate more traffic	10	6	5	8	12
	25%	15%	13%	20%	30%
Improvements should be low cost	0	6	7	15	15
	0%	14%	17%	35%	35%
Improvements should have minimal impact to existing businesses	2	8	21	11	2
	5%	19%	48%	25%	5%
Improvements should be consistent with corridor and land use plans	11	13	12	7	5
	23%	27%	25%	15%	11%

Next steps

Andy reviewed the next steps anticipated for the study:

September 2010

- Summarize comments received from Community Advisory Committee members
- Begin to prepare Implementation Plan

October 2010

- Draft Implementation Plan
 - The plan will be presented to the CAC in November.
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - The TAC meets outside of the public involvement process to advise the project team on the technical elements of the project. The TAC consists of the existing State Street Steering Committee members from the City of Boise, City of Eagle, City of Garden City, ACHD, Idaho Transportation Department, VRT and COMPASS and some additional agency staff from ACHD, VRT, and COMPASS.

November 2010

- Address comments and outstanding issues raised by the TAC
- Host the third and final Community Advisory Committee meeting

December 2010

- Host public open house
- Update Implementation Plan for adoption by the City of Boise Council, ACHD Commission, VRT Board, and other local and regional partners on the corridor.