



# Main Street Safety Project Governance Team Meeting

## **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

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November 15, 2021 – 2:00 to 3:30 pm

Via Zoom Virtual Meeting

### **Attendance**

#### **Staff/Consultant:**

City - Molly Markarian (Project Manager), Emma Newman, Loralyn Spiro, Michael Liebler, Dawn Williams  
ODOT – Bill Johnston (Project Manager)  
LTD – Tom Schwetz  
Consultants – John Bosket (DKS Associates, Project Manager), Allison Brown (JLA Public Involvement)

#### **Governance Team:**

Mayor Sean VanGordon (City of Springfield), Councilor Marilee Woodrow (City of Springfield), Frannie Brindle (ODOT Area Manager), Michelle Webber (LTD Board), Niel Laudati (City of Springfield Assistant City Manager), Mark Johnson (LTD Interim General Manager)

**CALL TO ORDER.** Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

### **Welcome/Introductions**

Introductions were made.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Allison Brown asked if anyone had any feedback and/or edits for the meeting minutes from the last time they met.

There was no comments or changes to the April 20, 2021 minutes.

### **Presentation**

Allison Brown turned it over to Molly Markarian.

Molly started with the purpose statement to remind everyone why they are all here. “The purpose of the Main Street Safety Project is to select infrastructure solutions that will make Main Street safer for

people walking, biking, driving and taking transit.” Early on in this planning phase the project team sought feedback from the community on their priorities and values for Main Street, which helped inform the goals and objectives, and in turn informed the development and evaluation of safety solutions. The Main Street Safety Project is recommending changes to Main Street to help improve safety and address the specific types of crashes that they see on Main Street. There is a high percentage of rear-end and turning movement crashes on the corridor, which are common on urban streets with a high number of intersections and driveways, but 80% is particularly high. The data shows that the primary causes of these crashes are failure to yield right-of-way and following too closely. They often receive questions from the community about whether there are specific areas on the corridor that see more crashes than others. Molly shared a slide showing that the crashes occur all along the corridor, which is why they need a corridor wide solution.

For the past three plus years, the project team has been refining solutions based on community input, technical analysis, and City Council feedback. This past spring the Springfield Planning Commission, Main Street Governance Team and the Springfield City Council acknowledged community input from the third round of community engagement and confirmed the toolbox recommendation met their expectations to date. This included addressing safety, recommending implementation of infrastructure elements with a balanced approach to improving safety and supporting business and economic development, and presenting the recommendations as a toolbox approach that can be implemented gradually in phases. At the May 10<sup>th</sup> City Council work session, the Council directed the project team to proceed with developing the draft Facility Plan which was done this summer in collaboration with the Technical Advisory Committee.

Molly went on to state that it was noted in the May 6<sup>th</sup> E-update that during the third round of engagement they heard some misconceptions about what the project was or was not. There were many business and property owners that engaged early on that may have not tracked the evolution of Main Street planning decisions since. Rumors that the project team is trying to dispel are addressed in more detail in Fact Sheet #5, which can be found on the project website.

Molly went on to cover the draft Facility Plan, which pulls together analysis, outreach, and design concepts from this planning phase. It is an expression of community values, it establishes a framework for design, and it signals to ODOT and the City to begin detailed design and construction. The draft Facility Plan is divided into five chapters: Chapter 1 is the introduction; Chapter 2 is the needs of the corridor; and Chapter 3 is the solutions development and evaluation process.

The toolbox approach described in Chapter 4 was informed by community feedback and their desire for flexibility, simplicity, and phase-ability. The primary tools are roundabouts, raised medians, and long-term cross section upgrades. There is an aspect to each tool that does not promote a one-size-fits-all approach.

The project team analyzed roundabouts and traffic signals at all major intersections on the corridor and found that roundabouts fared better in relation to the project goals. During design the specific context of each intersection will be considered, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Another key tool is raised medians as they would be the biggest contributor to increased safety. They address major turning conflicts which are one of the primary causes of crashes on Main Street. When medians are combined with roundabouts there would be an even greater crash reduction. With raised medians they are taking a Balance Safety and Access approach, which limits out of direction travel to 30-60 seconds, on average. The community indicated that this would be an acceptable trade off. They have developed a set of guiding principles to inform the design process. These guiding principles are an example for the median tool of how they are not taking a one-size-fits-all approach.

Molly went on to explain that they are recommending three base cross sections that would be applied as appropriate to provide design options flexibility for phasing. A diagram was shared to show where they recommend the Balanced Street Width and where they recommend the Active Transportation Enhanced cross sections. Potential modifications to each cross section are provided to allow for flexibility in design. The three base cross sections for short- and long-term implementation plus segment specific modification reflect a flexible approach.

Molly explained that Chapter 5 of the draft Facility Plan – implementing the toolbox of solutions, includes sections on how the toolbox can be implemented and how to use the plan to inform the design process. She noted that on page 106 of the plan, they explain the sequence of the adoption process going from the City of Springfield, the State, and then Central Lane MPO. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) would be amended after the Facility Plan is adopted to be included in the next cycle of updates to the RTP.

The phasing plan is also in Chapter 5. Construction of the full plan could take beyond 20 years to complete so all solutions will be implemented in phases due to limited funding availability. The key factors that were considered in developing the phases include safety, feasibility, functionality, and consistency. The first phase has the highest price tag, but they are looking at a full comprehensive first phase to showcase what the project can be. Molly explained the graphics on the phasing slide presented.

Molly stated that the project team evaluated the Springfield Comprehensive Plan, Transportation System Plan, and the Springfield Development Code to ensure policies and standards reflect the recommendations of the Main Street Facility Plan. Tech Memo #18 provides a high-level summary of changes needed, and Tech Memo #19 gets into details of recommended modifications to language in the Springfield Comprehensive Plan and the Springfield Development Code. Tech Memo #19 also recommends amendments in Chapter 5 of the Transportation System Plan and suggests updates to the preface and other administrative sections. Targeted modifications to the Development Code are recommended to be completed and adopted simultaneously with the Facility Plan.

A Special Street Setback provision was added to the Development Code as part of the Transportation System Plan implementation package in 2020. This section was intended to ensure that development based only on a building permit is constructed in a way that preserves options for future street connectivity. It requires that buildings not be constructed on area of future right-of-way. This setback does not require dedication of right-of-way until development occurs and does not set a right-of-way

line. The intent is to ensure that buildings are not constructed in locations that would make future streets impossible or highly impractical to construct. The recommended code amendments would enable the Special Street Setback provision to apply to facility plans and Main Street.

Molly went on to state that this fall they sought feedback on the draft Plan from the Strategic Advisory Committee and the broader community. This included e-updates to the interested parties list, which has approximately 800 members, and postcards to over 800 adjacent businesses and property owners encouraging recipients to review Fact Sheet #6 and the draft Plan and to provide feedback.

The project team largely received positive reception for the project and enthusiasm for the potential community benefit. They have received many questions regarding deliverables, stages, and outcomes. There was some skepticism that the effort and potential corridor impacts aren't worth the community benefits and lower confidence in corridor awareness of the project and feedback was not addressed as desired. They also heard from several business and property owners that the reasons they did not engage included last minute circumstances, lack of interest, other priorities, online format, and general agency distrust.

For the draft Facility Plan itself there was overall positive feedback and support for specific tools in the toolbox. There were many concerns for implementation impacts to site access and out of direction travel for residents, customers, and freight. As part of the last round of engagement the project team put together an interactive map that documents these site access concerns that can be used during the design phase to address the concerns. From some, there was acknowledgement that there is a safety problem, but they still doubt that the tools will address the project goals. There were several suggestions for alternative solution approaches.

Molly also noted that they had received input early in the month from the Springfield Planning Commission in response to the same questions that were presented to this team. The Planning Commission emphasized the importance of the project and appreciated the breadth and depth of community engagement. They acknowledged that the toolbox addresses the safety problem issues while conveying the challenges and solutions well. They noted that the code update is critical to demonstrating commitment to the Facility Plan. They highlighted the need for additional pedestrian crossings, lighting, landscaping, and traffic enforcement.

Molly turned the discussion back over to Allison.

Allison stated that there were a couple discussion questions. She asked if the draft Plan addresses their concerns, does it incorporate community feedback, does it meet their expectations?

Frannie Brindle commended the project team on the presentation and the attention to detail. She asked how much Phase 1 will cost.

Molly responded that on page 95 of the draft Facility Plan it shows that Phase 1 is broken into 1A, 1B and 1C and it totals an estimate of \$17.6 million. She added that is higher than what the team targeted

for each phase in order to put together a comprehensive first phase with roundabouts and raised medians in between to demonstrate what the project can be.

Frannie asked if it is necessary to have the two roundabouts right away or could they do one roundabout if they didn't get all the funding.

Molly responded that she thought that to enable freight mobility they would need to be on both ends.

Michael Liebler stated that they could always go back to the guiding principles and the different parts of the Facility Plan for guidance. From what they heard from the community it would be good to have those roundabouts work together. Operationally they could split out the project, but the ideal situation would be the two roundabouts to really show the benefits of the freight movements.

Frannie added that she sees that freight is a big issue at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street due to the industry there.

Molly clarified that the first phase that they are looking at is 32<sup>nd</sup> to 42<sup>nd</sup> Streets.

Frannie stated that it looked like they have enough right-of-way at Bob Straub and that calls for a roundabout at 54<sup>th</sup>.

Molly responded that in 2A they would be doing the interchange area management plan and then a roundabout at 54<sup>th</sup> which sets everything up to address the physical changes later.

Frannie stated that it would have been nice to spend a little bit more time discussing the rationale behind the phasing during the presentation.

Allison asked for any other reflections people may have and informed them that the discussions have been put into the chat.

Mayor VanGordon stated that he was excited to see how it progresses forward and wanted to recognize that a ton of work went into it and he appreciates it.

Councilor Woodrow noted that this has evolved over years and the more they focus on it the tighter it gets and the more responsive it gets to the community. She felt it was advancing in a good way and in a way that is going to meet what the community is asking for.

Mark Johnson stated that from a company that has seen more buses rear ended on Main Street than any other street in the county he was pleased with the consideration. He added that he really likes the conceptual design and while LTD does not love the idea of roundabouts, the design has been well thought out and the medians are also a good addition for safety.

Allison stated that it sounds as if most of them felt that the draft Plan addresses the concerns that were raised in previous meetings and meets their current expectations. She asked if that was a true statement.

The group gave visual concurrence.

Allison stated that Molly had covered some of the recommended policy amendments and asked if they had any questions or concerns.

Mayor VanGordon stated that he had no concerns but added that they were going to have questions that come out of the normal hearing process but as far as the starting point and where they are going, he had no concerns.

Allison asked again if anyone had any questions about the policy amendments.

There were no questions.

Allison stated that the team would need to prepare the Plan for public hearings and asked if they had any reflections or thoughts.

Councilor Woodrow stated that she appreciated that they continued to let people know what this project is not. There is always a lot of conversation going on away from this project and it is important to keep in front of people what is not part of this project. It doesn't matter how long they go in between the misinformation is still circulating. The other part she appreciated about the presentation is bringing forward that they are listening to the concerns and that the business and property owners know that there is flexibility. She added that she liked the way it was put together and conveys that they aren't just coming in with a rubber stamp but wanting and willing to be responsive to the concerns.

Mayor VanGordon stated that they must be committed to keep telling people and explaining the project to people. Even after a decade of work on this people still have a lot of misconceptions. He felt that sometimes the motor vehicle safety gets under reported because the pedestrian safety picture is so impactful. He added that when he hears the community talk, they are saying "how's a median going to help pedestrian safety?". So, he suggested addressing that one a little more. The only other suggestion he had was that they continue to say that this is a high-level concept and not a design. He felt the fear is that this is a design and not a road map.

Mark agreed that this is a conceptual drawing rather than a design. More importantly, this is a safety project. There are sacrifices when that is the goal. The more you sacrifice things that make the corridor safer the less you are going to approach other goals. It is a struggle because the property owners are voicing that it impacts them, but ultimately, they keep what is most important at the forefront.

Frannie stated that at the beginning of the presentation where they talk about the purpose of the project being safety for people walking, biking, driving, and taking transit, she felt that as they go through the toolbox for the corridor it is hard to get back to that. They need to help the community understand how each aspect of the toolbox helps each of these things.

Councilor Woodrow stated that as they put the pedestrian crossings in on Main Street, the cooperation from the property and business owners once they understood what was going in and why was tremendous. When they made sure safety was the key word they really stepped up. People are willing to make that sacrifice and flexibility when safety is involved.

Allison asked if Emma Newman would like to make some comments regarding the transit coordination pieces.

Emma Newman stated that Frannie had asked what the cost of the first phase is and how do they go from adoption to actual changes on the ground that are saving lives. She noted that on the bottom of page 89 there is footnote 42 and that emphasizes that the cost estimates that Molly referenced earlier do not incorporate the costs of Enhanced Corridor Transit. For instance, if they wanted to have concrete outside lanes that help with the durability of the roadway surface, those are not included in the \$17.6 million figure. Since LTD is part of this Governance Team, she wanted to make sure to note that in order to have the full vision of the Main Street corridor it would be about 20% more than the \$17.6 million for the first phase.

Allison stated that it sounds like there are some ways the team can continue to refine the message, to emphasize certain components so it can better land as it goes out for public hearings. But generally, she felt the consensus of the group was that it meets the expectations of the Governance Team and the group supports this going forward. She asked if that was correct.

The group gave visual concurrence.

Allison stated that they had until 3:30pm held but she was getting the feeling that they may not need the full time and asked if anyone had anything else to share. She asked if Molly had any other questions for the team.

Molly stated that she didn't have any questions, but she wanted the group to know that later this week the project team is taking this to the ODOT Mobility Advisory Committee and then in early December they have a work session with City Council. Then they are queued up to start the public hearing process, which starts with the Planning Commission in February.

Allison asked if anyone had any comments or considerations for the next steps for the team.

There were no comments.

Allison thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.