LTD AND CITY'S WEST 11TH TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT WHITE PAPER

I INTRODUCTION

This paper was prepared by the West Eugene Collaborative LTD/ City Task Force as a sub-working group of the West Eugene Collaborative. The report represents the discussions and reworking of several drafts based upon comments from those who chose to make them. In general, consensus was reached on most issues and any lack of resolution is specifically noted in this paper.

The task force consists of the following people:

- Rick Crinklaw
- Gerry Gaydos
- Pat Johnston
- Mary O'Brien
- Emily Proudfoot - Co-Chair
- Chris Pryor
- Larry Reed – Co-Chair
- Rusty Rexius
- Tom Schwetz
- Charles Snyder
- Sue Wolling
- Jan Wostmann

The purpose of the West Eugene Collaborative is stated below:

> *"Develop an integrated land use and transportation solution supported by stakeholders that will facilitate movement of people and commerce from/ through/ to west Eugene and west of Eugene while enhancing community, business and the environment."*

The West Eugene Collaborative charged the above task force with looking at LTD's and the City's planned projects in the western portion of Eugene. The task force was to study the near-term projects in terms of:

- Making some type of improvements to West 11th Avenue while looking at other possible near-term projects in the wider West Eugene area

- The feasibility of the west Eugene area having a bus rapid transit (BRT) route system.

- Feasibility would be based upon a comprehensive set of criteria reflecting community values. As a starting point, the RTP policy on BRT could be used (see below).
- If feasible routes are identified, the WEC may make a recommendation as to the most feasible BRT/ local bus route system for the West Eugene corridor.

Note: While the task force lacked consensus on the specific area and associated transit system planning that might be included in an LTD study, it was agreed that the specifics of such planning should be discussed with the larger collaborative, the City and LTD as their studies move forward.

II PROBLEM DEFINITION

A. Problem Statement

" There is a perception that the transportation system in West Eugene is inefficient and inadequate to address current and future transportation and land use patterns and needs. The City and LTD have been charged by the Eugene City Council and the LTD Board to study the West 11th Corridor, the specific reasons for the transportation problems in the area and potential strategies and solutions to these issues. The West Eugene Collaborative would like to explore geographically broader based solutions to these problems, while the agencies are charged to start with a narrower focus. Regardless of the approach, there is mutual recognition that the problems must be addressed now in order to avoid additional problems in the future. Finally, there is also agreement that the results of these two projects or any other near term projects must not preclude the ability to resolve larger, longer-term or more comprehensive issues. "

B. Identifying Community Issues and Constraints

When issues pertaining to a specific project are identified, community outreach should focus on finding out the specific values associated with local context and address these issues. Public input is encouraged when good project information is provided and community input credibly reported and questions answered.

Stakeholder interviews and input as part of public involvement plan development should provide a set of community issues, values, and constraints concerning the project. Results from such interviews may not necessarily provide a complete picture of all community values and interests. Most good public involvement plans call for broad community outreach at an early point in the project to ensure mutual understanding between the agency and the stakeholders of the full set of concerns associated with the project.

It may also be determined that some of the identified issues cannot be dealt with in the current project development process; they may need to be referred

to other agencies that can take appropriate action, shifted to another planning or project development process better suited to address them, or postponed for consideration at a later stage of project development. Those identified issues that do pertain to the project at hand should be incorporated into the problem definition and documented as input to the evaluation framework in the next step.

Outreach should be focused on understanding community attitudes about the nature of transportation problems or issues associated with the identified project. Specific concerns about safety or mobility, about land use or land development are of interest. Outreach should also focus on finding out the specific values associated with the local context. Importance of adverse effects (noise, cut-through traffic, speed of traffic, on-street parking, circulation, access to parks, schools, and businesses) should be expressed. Individuals or groups may note a concern or issue that might seem irrelevant to the project, but task force and agency staff should strive to maintain an open mind and to listen to what is being said. Often the issue will surface at some point in the project if left unaddressed.

Typical techniques for broad outreach to the public for the purpose of issue identification include newsletters with response forms, websites with electronic comment options, information telephone lines, surveys, briefings by officials and staff, open houses, and advisory groups.

III WEST EUGENE AREA CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. Constraints

1. Physical space limitations of West 11th Avenue (right-of-way width, existing developments, including location of buildings and number of existing drive accesses, etc.)
2. General lack of street grid connectivity
3. Limited amount of vacant open space for locating connecting streets
4. Existing land use patterns, including parks in the area
5. Natural resource and wetlands areas
6. Amazon drainage-way and its linear parks/ open space bike path system
7. Traffic congestion
8. Fear of change – Desire/ need to protect existing businesses and neighborhoods
9. Limited financial resources
10. Need to plan for expected high growth rate

B. Opportunities

1. Some amount of open space and underutilized land west of Highway 99 along the railroad on to the south to just north of 5th Avenue as possible connective street and BRT improvements

2. Amazon drainage-way and Fern Ridge Path as possible BRT route

3. Existing street system and possible improvements

   Note: Opportunities 1, 2, and 3 provide some ability to design a public transportation system for west Eugene (roughly bounded by Highway 99 to the north, and by 18th Avenue to the south) including a BRT line to Downtown Station and local bus routes, company shuttles, and park-and-ride facilities connecting to the BRT line.

4. Improve appearance of West 11th Avenue (pedestrian access, architecture, landscape)

5. Ability to mitigate for some environmental improvements (movement of traffic – avoiding stop and starts improves air quality, wetlands can be mitigated, trees planted)

6. Fern Ridge Path as currently underutilized high quality non-motorized transportation corridor.

7. The recognition that something must be done (existence of West Eugene Collaborative)

IV SCOPE OF CITY'S WEST 11th STUDY (DISCUSSION)

A. Questions

1. Are we trying to move traffic on West 11th more efficiently or trying to get traffic off of West 11th? (Reduce travel time or vehicle miles traveled (VMT))
   - Or are we trying to do both?
   - What effect on transit ridership does reduction of private vehicle travel time have?

2. How much local traffic versus through traffic is there?
   - Where is the traffic coming from? Perception and gut senses are there, but accurate information is needed. Origin and destination information, with volume by time of day specified, will be key. (Seems like it is mostly coming moving between the west and northwest.)
   - The AM, PM, and lunchtime peak hour vehicle trips and definition of these peak times:
     - Additional data/ transportation impact analysis counts and regional modeling incorporated into the analysis

        - What is ODOT's specific set of rules for allowance of out-of-direction travel to reach destinations? How might these affect opportunities for solutions?
    - What are the recent and projected growth statistics and land uses in west Eugene (roughly south of Highway 99 and north of 18th Avenue), and how are these expected to affect traffic patterns and volumes? (Can this be done without a land use and environmental inventory?)

3. What is ODOT's mission? Their mobility and safety goals are not so different from those that apply to locally managed facilities. The various road agencies all have a different scale with respect to their network focus (statewide, countywide, citywide).
    - The policy question is how to achieve a balance and integration among them. How does this affect opportunities for solutions? West Eugene may have competing missions.
    - What are ODOT's parameters and guidelines for out-of-direction travel? What is the impact of these parameters on planning for and within West Eugene?

4. Are there specific sites, road sections, intersections, etc. that contribute to system "failure"? (e.g., where do bottlenecks and traffic back-ups occur frequently?)

5. How can we identify currently underutilized routes, e.g., Roosevelt Avenue and its connection to West 11th, including the general issue of street (grid) connectivity and Fern Ridge Path?

6. How shall we share and examine information from the recently completed Travel Smart study. http://www.lcog.org/lgs/trans.html - Click "Final Report of TravelSmart Study"

7. What were the other proposals generated from the 20 years of WEP discussions and associated traffic studies that went with them?

8. What are the problems? (Problems are anecdotal by definition.)
    - Who is having the problem? (ID "concern" language)
    - Who are they complaining to?
    - How did we hear about it?
    - Do we choose to address the problem?
    - Is the problem now or in the future? (e.g., Rick Crinklaw IDs the overall problem as a "problem in time" and the opportunity to address the issues so they don't become a problem = redefine as "concern for future")

9. Should all remaining natural resources, including wetlands, be avoided?

10. What is the growth level in the outlying communities, and how will this growth influence the existing traffic patterns and volumes under various transportation scenarios? (Whether nothing changes or change does occur?)

    Note: Not all traffic growth in the last 25 or 30 years is the result of growth/ new development (nationwide).
    - More women in the workplace (driving to work)
    - Women owning their own vehicles and associated additional trips to support childcare, etc.
    - More teen driving (more affluent families)
    - 60 percent of trips are not business generated
    - Only 40 percent of all vehicle trips are work related and are concentrated at certain times of the day

11. How do we maximize use and usability of the existing West Eugene bike path system (e.g., signage, destination connection improvements to better utilize the bike system)?

B. Possible Strategies & Creative Approaches

The following listed items are examples, and the list is non-exhaustive and, therefore, not complete. The group agreed to catalog all ideas offered even if other members of the task force considered a particular idea unworkable or a "non-starter".

1. Improvements to West 11th Avenue
    - Intersection improvements
        - Turn lanes at key intersections
        - Bus turn-outs, with reliable re-entry procedures
        - Signal timing improvements
        - Signal system coordination between signals
    - Close some street intersections with West 11th to improve intersection spacing (movement of traffic)

- Access management of private driveway access
- Access management of left turns
- Intelligent (real-time info) signage and well-marked alternative routes to and from West 11th for through traffic heading north, south, or far to the east

2. A new street from 6th/ 7th north of the railroad with an intersection/ interchange at Beltline, then south on the route of the Beltline to West 11th

3. Improve/ widen existing West 11th Avenue (Route 126) out to the overpass at the railroad west of Greenhill Road.

4. Improve Roosevelt between Highway 99 and Beltline, including better signage, to promote West 11th as an alternative to downtown.

5. Use of programs to alter transportation users' life/ work schedules so that peak hour traffic is more evenly distributed throughout the day.

6. Possible connectivity projects (get more local and Highway 99 users off West 11th) (See attached map for the proposals below.)
   - Extend Terry Street south to West 11th/ Route 126, including extending Terry Street north to Clearlake Road.
   - Improve Greenhill Road from West 11th/ Route 126 north to airport and Highway 99.
   - Open West 13th Street from Bailey Hill to Bertelsen
   - Widen- improve 18th Street, including better north/ south connections between Bertelsen, Bailey Hill, etc.)
   - Open and improve Stewart Street to through traffic

   Note: West of Beltline there can be alternative street designs that we put forward to ODOT for developmental STIP; however, a closer look will need to be taken to clearly identify the actual developability of the north and south sides of West 11th in this area. This area also has Fender's Blue Butterfly habitat, wetlands, and BLM land.

7. (Future) Widen West 11th out to Veneta (surface or elevated highway)

8. Focus of joint study effort is around the transportation problems on and around West 11th Avenue, but the solutions don't have to be.

9. A longer term plan for West 11th should be developed for purposes of continuity as improvements to West 11th will necessarily be implemented over an extended period of time.

V SCOPE OF LTD BRT/ LOCAL BUS SYSTEM STUDY (DISCUSSION)

The following quote is from the RTP's BRT policy. The policy reads:

> *"Establish a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system composed of frequent, fast transit service along major corridors and neighborhood feeder service that connects with the corridor service and with activity centers, if the system is shown to increase transit mode split along BRT corridors, if local governments demonstrate support, and if financing for the system is feasible."*

Note: Also included is the RTP's 'Definition and Intent' language for the BRT policy at the end of this document. It provides a summary of the original thinking and conversations among planners and adopting officials that occurred around BRT leading up to TransPlan's adoption in 2001.

A. Questions

What is the question we are trying to answer?
Will BRTgo to West Eugene? and/or
Where will BRT go in West Eugene? and/or
What is a BRT/Local Bus System, and how could it work in West Eugene?

1. How can the West Eugene Collaborative help answer either one or more of these questions?

2. Can we confirm or refute that there is sufficient need for a third BRT corridor in Springfield and Eugene? Does this BRT project ridership justify the public investment/ cost? (Can this question be asked apart from whether West 11th is improved?)

   Note:
   1. Nationally, transit ridership currently runs about 2 to 4 percent of the daily trips; in the future, at best, is 8 to 15 percent max (note – locally, transit carries 2 percent of daily trips and 8-10 percent of peak period trips). Therefore, we won't be replacing the need for personal vehicles in the near or medium term.
   2. Personal conveyance (vehicles) is here to stay, as a percentage of our transportation modes. How we power (fuel) these personal vehicles will likely change.

3. Given that land use and transportation relationships will be essential to the success and consensus of the West Eugene Collaborative:

- What are the opportunities for changes in adjacent and associated land use? (As part of our transportation study – at least we should be willing to discuss.)
- How can existing and future land uses support a BRT/Local Bus System? What is the future of transit-oriented development in West Eugene?

4. What other kinds of transit architecture systems exist to meet transit service needs goal? (e.g., monorail, various types of local bus route and service, various types of service on major arterials)

5. How far west are we looking? (Geography question) What is the time frame? (Now or much later? 10 years or 20 years? Current versus the ideal?)

   Note: Any near-term BRT system should not preclude extending BRT to Veneta.

6. What are the recent and projected growth statistics for the area between Highway 99 and West 18th?
   - Where is the recent and expected growth within this area?
   - What other land use patterns within this area might affect the design of a BRT/ Local Bus System?
   - What is the City's plan for growth or non-growth in West Eugene? (Do we need land use and natural resource inventories for this area?)

7. Would the use of West 11th as the BRT route to West Eugene reduce traffic capacity of the street?

8. Are long-range transportation improvements worth possible neighborhood and environmental impacts?

9. What are the trade-offs between geographical siting of a BRT route and its overall usability by riders?

B. Possible BRT/ Local Bus System Routes

The task force did not reach agreement as to the proper amount for screening for potential BRT/Local Bus System routes to and through West Eugene. The following ideas are examples, and the list is non-exhaustive and, therefore, not complete. The group agreed to catalog all ideas offered even if other members of the task force considered a particular idea unworkable or a "non-starter".

1. Use of West 11th for BRT line (see attached map for specific route)

2. South route for BRT line: use of West 12th or 13th Avenue out to a connection to the north side of the Amazon linear park out to Beltline (see attached map for specific route alternatives)

3. North route for BRT line: Use of 6th/ 7th Avenues (Highway 99), then west, using 5th Avenue or other route out to Beltline (see attached map for specific route alternatives)

4. Siting factors for BRT route and West Eugene Terminal:
    - Look at possible changes of land use along the routes for high-density housing, mixed use centers, housing, retail, and employment
    - Look at potential terminal locations for park-and-ride lots (opportunities)
    - Look at potential terminal locations allowing facilities for rider services
    - Look at potential terminal locations allowing accommodation for local buses
    - Look at potential terminal locations allowing accommodation for employer shuttles
    - Look at potential terminal locations allowing accommodation for long term secure bicycle parking.
    - Look at minimizing neighborhood and environmental impacts

5. Develop a plan for each proposed BRT route that also shows the web of local connecting routes and terminals that will form the BRT/Local Bus System for West Eugene

VI NEEDS AND RESOURCES

A. Maps of Area

- Aerial photo
- Parcel/ lot map
- Arterial/ Collector street map (with traffic volumes)
- Land use zoning map
- Current LTD route maps
- Maps referenced to and illustrating each of the proposed routes and projects referred to above

B. Financial Support (Funding)

- City
- County
- State (ODOT)
- Federal
- Grants (e.g., Ford Foundation)

C. Information on experiences with rapid transit in other medium-sized cities (including in other countries).

D. A Series of Transportation Transit "101" Level Introductory/ Training for the WEC

VII MILESTONES FOR CITY AND LTD

A. Finalize scope of transportation studies needed

B. Complete Transportation and Traffic Studies

- Regional modeling transportation study (See DKS Associates scope of services for a description of and contract for this study)
- Traffic impact analysis specific to West 11th
- Study of West Eugene's potential BRT ridership for each of the alternative BRT/Local Bus System proposals

C. Develop Public Involvement Process

- Public process integrated throughout overall Eugene/LTD planning process. West Eugene collaborative sub-committee could inform, shape, plan and design components or overall public involvement plan for the LTD and City studies.

D. Develop Evaluation and Decision-Making Process

- Goals
- Problems,
- Project/ investment purpose and need
- Evaluation criteria

  The following are some examples of criterion:
  - Least impact on existing neighborhoods
  - Most environmentally friendly
  - Best opportunity to take advantages of land use to higher density in the future
  - Most effective at alleviating traffic problems

Note: Agencies are usually more comfortable with evaluating alternatives based on quantitative measures of capacity, safety, design standard compliance, plan compliance, and minimization of direct impacts to known natural resources. However, they are generally less comfortable with attempts to measure the effects of alternatives on issues such as "quality of life" or "community cohesion". These are often viewed as intangible and, therefore, immeasurable. However, if these are important issues to the stakeholders, they must be tackled head-on. Ignoring these just because they seem

difficult to measure sends the wrong message to stakeholders that they are unimportant. In any event, there have been many successes in working with stakeholders to develop quantifiable evaluation criteria for such categories. When properly prompted, individuals with knowledge of the project area and pressing concerns about future development can usually pinpoint specific, measurable items that capture their concerns.

E. Analyze alternatives and their effects for both the City and LTD projects

1. Streets analysis milestones, for instance:
    - West 11th may be thought of as made up of rather different segments, with boundaries at Willamette, Washington Street, Chambers, Bailey Hill, Beltline, and Green Hill. What will operational and safety improvements to each distinct segment of West 11th Avenue do in terms of effects on that segment and other segments of West 11th?
    - Can alternative and connective street routes and signage lessen traffic on various segments of West 11th?
    - What impacts will each proposed alternative BRT/ local bus system plan have both overall and on the various segments of West 11th's existing traffic capacity?

2. LTD/ BRT/ local bus system analysis milestone is to proceed or not proceed with a BRT/ local bus system in West Eugene.

F. Select alternative consensus courses of action for each project, including conducting neighborhood and open houses to obtain feedback. Public input events will be conducted and recorded by WEC membership, or agreed upon recording agents.

G. Begin refinement of alternatives and more analysis for each project

H. Develop and achieve consensus on projects for the City's near-term street improvements and the LTD/ BRT/ local bus system routes

ATTACHMENT

BRT Policy Definition and Intent

Policy Definition/Intent:
BRT is, in essence, the use of buses to emulate the positive characteristics of a rail system, but at a fraction of the cost of a rail system. The BRT system will include:

- Exclusive busways along the majority of each corridor,
- Faster boarding through low-floor, multiple door vehicles,
- Minimum ten minute frequency during peak hours,
- Increased convenience and comfort,
- Limited stops,
- Improved travel time through reduction of impact from normal traffic congestion through bus priority treatment
- A connected system of BRT corridor and neighborhood routes

BRT, when combined with other system improvement, land use, and demand management strategies, is expected to increase the share of riders who use public transportation. BRT is also expected to help the region maintain conformity with federal air quality standards. BRT, combined with nodal development, is a key strategy in the regions compliance with alternative performance measures for the Transportation Planning Rule. Commitment by the region to full system build out of BRT is essential to meeting the alternative performance measures. The full system will include 61 miles of BRT corridor service. The majority of each corridor will include exclusive busways. When funding or traffic conditions restrict implementation of exclusive busways within a corridor, priority should be given to improvements providing the greatest benefit to travel time savings. The BRT strategy will be implemented to the extent that planning and engineering studies show that the system would increase the use of transit, is supported by the community, and can be funded. As BRT is implemented, LTD, Springfield, Eugene, Lane County, and ODOT will consider neighborhood impacts when designing elements of specific segments.

Reference: Based on Decision Package, November 1996, Strategy 5; TEA 21 Metropolitan Planning Factor C.