Stakeholder Group Meeting #3 – Meeting Notes

Downtown Boise Implementation Plan – Boise Bicycle Lanes

August 5, 2014 12:00 – 2:00 PM
Ada County Highway District, Auditorium

INTRODUCTION (DAVE WALLACE - ACHD)
- Dave Wallace provided an overview of the meeting’s agenda and purpose
- See sign-in sheet for list of attendees...all Stakeholders were represented

MISSION STATEMENT AND ISSUES TO SOLVE (DAVE WALLACE - ACHD)
- Dave reviewed the mission statement, noting that “path” has been removed per feedback from the group
- It is important that the group recommend an alternative that is practically feasible – “hope is not a strategy”
- Issues to be solved were reviewed
  o Accessibility and transit are not on the list, but should be
    ▪ Accessibility is included in parking

ACTIVITIES SINCE THE LAST MEETING (DAVE WALLACE - ACHD)
- Dave recapped activities that have taken place since the last stakeholder group meeting
- The working group (ACHD, City of Boise, Downtown Business Association, CCDC, and Kittelson & Associates) met twice to develop three alternatives
- Two potential transit-related items need to be considered
  o The multimodal center under the US Bank Building
  o Buses may temporarily stage on Capitol Boulevard in front of Boise City Hall
    ▪ City of Boise noted that this would not happen if it interfered with the ability to implement a recommended alternative from this group
- Engineering surveys of the curb-to-curb width of Capitol, Main, and Idaho have been completed
  o Allows us to determine what exactly is feasible
  o Key considerations:
    ▪ Inconsistent cross-sections
    ▪ Contraflow bus lane (Capitol only)

WHY MAIN/IDAHO/CAPITOL (DAVE WALLACE – ACHD; DAREN FLUKE – CITY OF BOISE)
- Dave provided an overview of the reasons identified by the group for why Main, Idaho, and Capitol are being considered
  o Fits within the overall mission statement
  o Provide good, if not the best, access to destinations in downtown and through travel across downtown with either signalized crossings of major streets at either end of downtown (Main and Idaho) or a bridge across the river (Capitol)
o Other routes (e.g. Jefferson, Bannock, 5th/6th) don't necessarily meet objectives as well

- Daren described the City's perspective on choosing these routes
  o Want to slow traffic to provide a more walkable environment
  o These streets will remain one-way and have the most room
  o Main and Idaho connect to the existing routes into downtown from all directions

- The river limits connectivity to the south
- ACHD is looking at improvements for Americana
- Will signal timing be addressed?
  o It will be discussed later
- Main and Idaho as primary routes is up for discussion
- CCDC has developed streetscape plans for Capitol that move the curb lines.
  o May need to be modified depending on the selected alternative

POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES (DAVE WALLACE - ACHD)

- DBIP
  o Matt Edmond discussed DBIP as adopted
    ▪ Highlighted work being award the next day, including 2-way conversions and overlays, as well as the timing of the rest of the planned projects
    ▪ The boundary may change to include a connection over the river at Capitol and to include 15th Street north to Fort Street
    ▪ Bike lanes may not fit on 5th and 6th even if they remain one-way
  
  o Dave showed a slide that summarizes DBIP and possible changes
    ▪ Red text is not in concrete, but up for consideration
      • Starting the bike lane on Capitol north of the bridge, instead of only in the overlay boundary this year
      • Protected bike lane with floating parking on Capitol from Main to Bannock
        o Continues the natural curb-tight path for people on bikes
        o Two accessible parking spaces would need to be relocated
      • Painted buffer on Capitol south of Main may be an option
    ▪ Does this option require removing a motor vehicle lane on Capitol?
      • Only if a treatment is provided across the bridge
      • North of the bridge, lanes may be narrowed, but none would be removed in this alternative
  
  o Pros and cons of were discussed, as outlined on the slide
  
  o No changes to bus stops in this scenario

- DBIP Amended
  o Builds on DBIP by adding paint buffered bike lanes on Main, Idaho, and Capitol where feasible
  o Jefferson Street may also no longer have bike lanes under this alternative in order to preserve parking and provide turn lanes at major intersections
  o May include a two-way protected bike lane from River Street to Cesar Chavez on Capitol
  o Special attention would need to be paid to Main Street at the multimodal center
  o The option to convert Main and Idaho to protected bike lanes later on would not be precluded
  o The only floating parking would be on Capitol from Main to Bannock (same as DBIP)
  o Parking impacts of this alternative have not been specifically identified, yet
  o Why not extend the two-way protected bike lane on Capitol to University?
- The wide sidewalk on the south side of the bridge could potentially serve as a shared-use path, so the goal is to connect to where Royal would be extended
  - Maintenance is still a consideration where the floating parking would be
  - Calling anything final is difficult since a lot is going on downtown
    - Should maintain flexibility
  - Capitol from River to Main is a paint buffered bike lane
  - Pros and cons of were discussed, as outlined on the slide
  - Capitol would have one travel lane removed across the bridge to River Street, essentially maintaining its 3-lane configuration north to River Street where it would widen out to 4 lanes where
    - The extra capacity is needed north of River Street
  - Cars would still park curb-tight on Idaho and Main
  - Intersection treatments would need to be considered along Main and Idaho
    - It’s easier to provide adequate visibility of people bicycling and cars turning with buffered lanes than it is protected lanes
  - The painted buffer on Main and Idaho could be on both sides of the bike lane (i.e. between the bike lane and the adjacent travel lane and between the bike lane and the parking lane)

- DBIP Amended Plus
  - Dave identified the main differences introduced by Amended Plus from Amended as being:
    - Protected bike lanes, instead of buffered bike lanes, on Main, Idaho, and Capitol
    - Bike signals might be considered
    - Accessible parking has to be addressed
  - Need to consider how to treat the bike lane around the bus lane outside the multimodal center on Main
    - Bulb-outs/islands could be one solution
    - ACHD is considering recommending legislation that gives buses priority when they are re-entering traffic
    - Some design treatments may require removing a travel lane
  - Why wouldn’t the bike lanes be on the left side?
    - It’s uncommon to have a bike lane on the left side of moving traffic
    - Parking garages are an issue on Main
    - Heavy left-turning movements at Main/Capitol and Idaho/9th
    - More accesses on the north side of Main
    - Two-way conversions will not change these items
  - Including bike signals would require evaluation of how they would fit in with the overall system
    - They can improve bike accessibility, but can make overall progression more difficult
    - There are a range of timing options
      - Leading bicycle phases are more simple to implement than bike/ped exclusive phases
  - What about floating parking as a buffer on Capitol from the bridge to River Street?
    - Can be considered
  - Would the two-way protected bike lane look different than the one-way lanes?
    - Yes, it will be striped and marked to indicate it is two lanes for flow in opposite directions
Could there be a combination of buffered and protected lanes depending on availability of space?
- Yes

Can bike boxes be considered in all alternatives?
- Yes

Will the bike lanes be 8 feet wide?
- The exact width is not known at this time
- 8 feet is the ideal combined width of the buffer and the bike lane

Sight triangles w/ bike parking
- Have to consider bus access, too

Maintenance can also be less of an issue with a buffer that is not candlesticks

What’s the innovative idea for treatments around the multimodal center?
- Don’t have a definitive treatment identified, yet, as the survey still needs to be examined
- It will be figured out if this is the option that is moved forward

Do we need a protected bike lane on Capitol or just a conventional bike lane?
- Some people are still using what was left off the bike lanes

Dave provided a summary of what issues would need to be addressed in the design of each alternative

- CCDC, the City of Boise, and ACHD will need to discuss what type of buffer is used on Capitol, if one is to be used, in advance of the Commission meeting
  - Some type of hard buffer is in Amended Plus
  - A hard buffer is not in Amended to avoid putting too much into it
  - Congestion impacts of removing a travel lane on Capitol are not as well known as they are on Main and Idaho because BSU let out during the pilot project
  - Sight distance at Fulton was an issue during the pilot project due to the floating parking and people trying to get all the way across Capitol when turning out
    - Cars would need to dwell in the bike lane

- Fire department concerns
  - Only one or two spots were of minor concern during the pilot and that could be fixed
  - Should not be on the list of issues

Dave reviewed his qualitative assessment of how well each alternative meets various objectives identified by the group

- “through travel” refers to people on bikes
  - Same with business access

- Affordability is not red for Amended Plus because costs may be shared by multiple agencies

- Pedestrian comfort primarily refers to the ability of an alternative to reduce the number of bicycles on the sidewalk and calm motor vehicle traffic

LOADING ZONES (DAVE WALLACE - ACHD)
- Dave showed a map of loading zones in the area and noted that this will be something that has to be addressed, no matter the alternative
  - Delivery cut-outs on the left-hand side of Main and Idaho are another reason to consider bike lanes on the right-hand side
CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND NEXT STEPS (DAVE WALLACE – ACHD)

- The Commission meeting is scheduled for 8/26
- The joint City Council/Commission meeting may be 9/11
- Who is making recommendations to the Commission?
  - The stakeholders
- It would be nice for the stakeholders to be able to review concept sketches of each alternative before making a recommendation
- There is not time to take more time to check back-in with the parent organizations of each stakeholder
- Could the group just articulate a statement of principles
- There is not a need to rush Main and Idaho, since they are not scheduled for overlays this year
  - Agreement on Capitol is more critical in the near-term
- Don’t want a piecemeal solution
- The stakeholder group will meet again next Tuesday (8/12) to talk about principles and review visual concepts
  - E-mail principles to Dave in advance