

## CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

March 30, 2010

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in study session at 5:35 p.m., in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 30th day of March, 2010, and notice of the meeting was posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Atkins, Butler, Dillingham, Ezzell, Griffith, Kovach, Quinn, Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: Councilmember Cubberley

### DISCUSSION REGARDING TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES FOR PORTER AVENUE FROM ALAMEDA STREET TO ROBINSON STREET IN CONNECTION WITH THE PORTER AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN.

Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development, said Staff has continued to develop additional pieces of work to support the Porter Avenue Corridor Study since September 2009, specifically a Zoning Overlay District including Design Guidelines, a Streetscape Design Plan created by Ochsner Hare and Hare (OH&H), and the compilation of funding sources and cost estimates for plan implementation. She said Planning and Community Development Staff and Public Works Staff have also been collaborating on a next step traffic analysis to advance the work begun by the OH&H team in the Porter Avenue Corridor Study.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, presented four possible traffic alternatives for Porter Avenue as follows:

- Alternative 1 – Do nothing along Porter Avenue
- Alternative 2 – Build a 4-Lane Improved Roadway (total roadway width: 52 feet)
- Alternative 3 – Build a 3-Lane Roadway with modern roundabouts at Acres and Alameda (total roadway width: 40 feet)
- Alternative 4 – Build a 5-Lane Roadway with modern roundabouts at Acres and Alameda (total roadway width: 64 feet)

Mr. O'Leary said each alternative was analyzed and modeled by Traffic Division staff with the assumption of an annual 2% growth in traffic volumes between 2010 and 2030. The average daily traffic volume between Alameda and Main Street is 21,157 vehicles per day. 2030 traffic projections based on 2% increase per year is 31,437 vehicles per day.

#### **Alternative 1 – Do Nothing**

- Maintain existing roadway facility in its current condition
- Level of service (LOS) capacity for 4-lane roadway with narrow lanes
  - LOS 'C' = 19,800 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'D' = 25,295 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'E' = 30,780 vehicles per day
- Reserved Traffic Capacity
  - 2010 – LOS 'C' = 0.00%/LOS'D' = 16.36%/LOS 'E' = 31.27%
  - 2030 - LOS 'C' = 0.00%/LOS'D' = 0.00%/LOS 'E' = 0.00%
- Average Travel Speed
  - PM Peak (2010) – 14 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 7 miles per hour
- Fuel Economy
  - PM Peak (2010) – 11.2 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 7.2 miles per hour

#### **Alternative 2 – 4-Lane Improved Roadway (two lanes per direction) plus modern roundabouts at Alameda Street and Acres Street**

- Reconstruct roadway as a 4-lane facility in accordance with current City, State and Federal Standards (two lanes per direction of travel plus), modern roundabouts at the intersections with Alameda Street and Acres Street, and access management improvements

- Typical section – curb and gutter urban roadway with 4-lanes (13 foot outside lanes and 12 foot inside lanes)
- Total roadway width – 52 feet and right-of-way width – 100 feet; additional right-of-way needed – 40 feet (20 feet per side)
- Level of service (LOS) capacity for 4-lane roadway with narrow lanes
  - LOS 'C' = 22,000 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'D' = 28,100 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'E' = 34,200 vehicles per day
- Reserved Traffic Capacity
  - 2010 – LOS 'C' = 3.83%/LOS'D' = 24.71%/LOS 'E' = 38.14%
  - 2030 - LOS 'C' = 0.00%/LOS'D' = 0.00%/LOS 'E' = 8.08%
- Average Travel Speed
  - PM Peak (2010) – 21 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 14 miles per hour
- Fuel Economy
  - PM Peak (2010) – 12.5 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 9.9 miles per hour

**Alternative 3** – 3-Lane Roadway (one lane per direction plus a continuous 2-way left turn lane and modern roundabouts at Alameda Street and Acres Street)

- Reconstruct roadway using the existing width and stripe three traffic lanes (one per direction of travel plus one continuous 2-way left turn lane), modern roundabouts at the intersections with Alameda Street and Acres Street, and access management improvements
- Typical section – curb and gutter urban roadway with two 13 foot lanes (one per direction of travel) plus a 14-foot continuous 2-way left turn lane)
- Total roadway width – 40 feet and right-of-way width – 60 feet; additional right-of-way needed – none
- Level of service (LOS) capacity for 4-lane roadway with narrow lanes
  - LOS 'C' = 12,000 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'D' = 15,600 vehicles per day
  - LOS 'E' = 19,200 vehicles per day
- Reserved Traffic Capacity
  - 2010 – LOS 'C' = 0.00%/LOS'D' = 0.00%/LOS 'E' = 0.00%
  - 2030 - LOS 'C' = 0.00%/LOS'D' = 0.00%/LOS 'E' = 0.00%
- Average Travel Speed
  - PM Peak (2010) – 17 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 6 miles per hour
- Fuel Economy
  - PM Peak (2010) – 10.9 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 5.5 miles per hour
- Inconsistent with Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan Classification – Principal Urban Arterial and Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Service (OCARTS) 2030 Classification. The Norman 2025 Plan would need to be amended and an application made to OCARTS for a plan modification. Would not be eligible for federal funding unless the plan was consistent.

**Alternative 4** – 5-Lane Roadway (two lanes per direction plus a continuous 2-way left turn lane and modern roundabouts at Alameda Street and Acres Street)

- Reconstruct roadway as a 5-lane facility in accordance with current City, State and Federal standards plus one continuous 2-way left turn lane), modern roundabouts at the intersections with Alameda Street and Acres Street, and access management improvements
- Typical section – curb and gutter urban roadway with five lanes (two per direction of travel plus one continuous 2-way left turn lane) 13 foot outside lanes, 12 foot inside lanes, and 14 foot center lane.

- Total roadway width – 64 feet and right-of-way width – 120 feet; additional right-of-way needed – 60 feet (30 feet per side).
- Level of service (LOS) capacity for 4-lane roadway with narrow lanes
  - LOS ‘C’ = 24,000 vehicles per day
  - LOS ‘D’ = 30,000 vehicles per day
  - LOS ‘E’ = 36,000 vehicles per day
- Reserved Traffic Capacity
  - 2010 – LOS ‘C’ = 11.85%/LOS ‘D’ = 29.48%/LOS ‘E’ = 41.23%
  - 2030 - LOS ‘C’ = 0.00%/LOS ‘D’ = 0.00%/LOS ‘E’ = 12.67%
- Average Travel Speed
  - PM Peak (2010) – 21 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 16 miles per hour
- Fuel Economy
  - PM Peak (2010) – 12.4 miles per hour
  - PM Peak (2030) – 10.7 miles per hour

Councilmember Atkins said the term “Access Management Improvements” was used in some alternatives and asked what it referred to. Mr. O’Leary said this would mean closing driveways or combining driveways recommended to allow the road to operate efficiently and reducing right and left turns. He said all alternatives include access management improvements except Alternative 1.

Councilmember Butler asked if the right-of-way width were a national standard. Mr. O’Leary said it was a City and OCARTS standard. He said the amount needed would accommodate utilities, sidewalks, drainage, and landscaping.

Mayor Rosenthal asked what the process was to change the Norman 2025 Plan and the OCARTS Plan. Mr. O’Leary said City Council would be in control of the local plan and Mr. Angelo Lombardo, City Traffic Engineer, said the City would submit resolutions to OCARTS adopted by Council supporting the changes to the OCARTS Plan and he was not sure what the reaction would be to reducing the lanes from four to three.

Mr. O’Leary illustrated the impact that 100 feet of right-of-way and 120 feet of right-of-way had on existing properties. He said the three-lane alternative would also have impacts because there would be right-of-way acquisition for the roundabouts.

He said that the Porter Avenue Steering Committee ranked the four alternatives using 100 points. They ranked priorities of Transportation Function (as a north-south arterial); Mobility (travel speed); Traffic Safety (number of accidents); Reserved Capacity (levels of service); Emissions; Corridor Preservation; Pedestrian Friendliness; Costs; and Aesthetics. He said Corridor Preservation was the most important factor selected, Aesthetics was second, and Pedestrian Friendliness was third and Alternative 3 was the highest ranked alternative.

Councilmember Kovach asked how these categories had been selected. Mr. O’Leary said they tried to relate the categories to the model with a few exceptions such as Pedestrian Friendliness which was difficult to measure and Transportation Function was more subjective to determine how important it is. He asked why the category Public Buy In had not been considered because there had been so much public feedback. Mr. O’Leary said it was an attempt to bring objectivity to the discussion and revisions to the survey could be made if Council wished.

Councilmember Atkins asked if the width of sidewalks and roundabouts had been considered a mobility issue as part of Pedestrian Friendliness. Mr. Lombardo said crossing Porter Avenue had been the main consideration and Alternative 4 had ranked lower because pedestrians would have to cross a five-lane street. Councilmember Atkins asked if any traffic signals had been eliminated in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. Mr. O’Leary said the only traffic signal to be eliminated would be the one on Alameda which would be replaced with a roundabout.

Councilmember Ezzell asked what Access Management Devices were proposed for Alternative 3. Mr. O'Leary said OH&H had prepared an analysis of Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 which show graphics describing where access management is a real problem and that will be provided in the next report. He said combining driveways, eliminating driveways, and moving parking to the rear of some of the properties were some of the access management solutions suggested. Councilmember Kovach asked if an Alternative 5 could be added to maintain the current configuration and apply access management to reduce accidents and Mr. O'Leary said that could be done.

Councilmember Dillingham said whether an interim solution could be developed now to address access and safety. Mr. O'Leary said improvements to traffic safety and mobility needed to be addressed in the Corridor because projections show that traffic will continue to grow or traffic needed to be routed somewhere else. Councilmember Dillingham asked how enhanced public transportation fit in to the solution and Mr. O'Leary said this has not been completely explored. He said bus routing is possible in all alternatives although on a three-lane street, it would be a challenge.

Mayor Rosenthal asked if Staff had met with property owners regarding right-of-way for the access management strategies. Ms. Connors said OH&H had met with some of the property owners but not all.

Councilmember Atkins asked if the Survey would be provided to any other groups. Mayor Rosenthal said it might be good for Council to look at the survey. Councilmember Kovach asked if the survey could add the possibility of Alternative 5 since it was possible the funding was not available for Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 and Mr. O'Leary said this could be done.

Mr. O'Leary said OH&H had also been looking at a Hybrid of the Corridor which was not a three-lane recommendation on the whole project but a combination of access management in the areas that were not changed.

Councilmember Atkins asked what the ballpark figures would be for each alternative. Mr. O'Leary said approximate costs for construction and utility but not including right-of-way were \$7 million for Alternative 2, three lanes; \$11.3 million for Alternative 3, four lanes; and \$12.7 million for Alternative 4, five lanes. He said the challenge would be right-of-way. He said research was being conducted on property values and analysis of total acquisition or access only costs. He said OH&H included aesthetics and enhancements as part of these costs.

Councilmember Ezzell asked how many buildings would have to come out with Alternatives 2 and 4 and Mr. O'Leary said he could not give that information this evening but could follow up.

Councilmember Quinn asked if there are statistics regarding usage and accidents on the East Main Street roundabout. He said the concerns he had heard from constituents were about the use of roundabouts. Mr. O'Leary said no data has been prepared but could be provided. He said the modern roundabouts installed throughout the country had shown very good traffic efficiency and mobility and solved major problems in difficult traffic situations. He said the negatives were that they could be expensive to install and public "buy-in". Councilmember Quinn asked if the size of the East Main Roundabout would be comparable to the one installed on Porter. He said the one on Acres would be the same size but the one on Alameda would be larger. Councilmember Kovach asked how long it would take to construct the roundabout. Mr. O'Leary said it took about six months for the one on East Main Street but Porter would take longer because of relocation of utilities and properties. Councilmember Kovach asked which commercial properties would have access completely closed off. Mr. O'Leary said the roundabout would have to be built in phases and there would have to be some kind of alternative provided to allow traffic through.

Councilmember Dillingham asked if there are examples of this type of project from other cities and Mr. O'Leary said this could be researched.

Councilmember Atkins asked if costs for the Front Street alternative had been developed. Mr. O'Leary said some research had been done and could be provided.

Mayor Rosenthal asked if reimbursement of Federal funds applied only to construction costs and Mr. O'Leary said right-of-way, design, and utility relocation costs were paid by the local agency. He said the utility relocation costs did not look that significant to the City for this project.

Mayor Rosenthal said adding Alternative 5 had been suggested and asked Staff to prepare an estimate of what that might cost. She said obtaining input from other groups should also be considered. She said those who lived in the neighborhoods, the Downtowner's Association, and an expanded group of the stakeholders should be contacted.

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated March 25, 2010, from Susan F. Connors, Director, Planning and Community Development, to the Honorable Mayor Cindy Rosenthal and Councilmembers
2. Power Point Presentation entitled, "Transportation Alternatives, Porter Avenue from Alameda Street to Robinson Street, presented to the Porter Avenue Corridor Study – Steering Committee, March 23, 2010

Participants in discussion

1. Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development Planning and Community Development
2. Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works
3. Mr. Angelo Lombardo, City Traffic Engineer

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

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City Clerk

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Mayor