

March 22, 2019

Karen Swirsky
Senior Planner
Growth Management Department
City of Bend

Subject: Phase Two
Bend's Transportation Plan Update
Public Outreach

Dear Karen:

The City of Bend has conducted two outreaches to the public regarding the transportation planning with CTAC. The first outreach was an open house held last year to inform the public of the CTAC scope of work and to gauge what transportation issues matter to the public. More recently, five workshops were held to gauge neighborhoods' opinions on a number of neighborhood level projects.

Our board felt the open house and workshops may not have conveyed an accurate reading of what our neighborhood cares about regarding the future of transportation in Bend. The open house was held early in the planning process before a list of possible projects was generated and the workshops format seemed focused primarily on a list of projects generated by staff and supplemented by CTAC. The purpose of this letter to provide some observations regarding both of these outreaches:

- **Eight RWNA neighborhood traffic safety concerns**
- **A ten-question survey repeating mostly workshop potential projects.**

1. Neighborhood traffic safety concerns: In the open house, safety was the highest rated concern. More recently we feel staff/CTAC are focused on a set of safety projects taken from a Federal Highway Administration document and may not be aware neighborhood specific traffic safety concerns:

- a. Preventing cut-through traffic through local neighborhoods. Columbia Street is the poster child of this potential disaster. Once roundabouts are built at Simpson/Columbia and Colorado/Columbia, a motorist can proceed from Bond to Galveston without stopping. This street would function like a collector through a local neighborhood. Our members are opposed to adding a "mini-roundabout" at Galveston/Harmon which would allow a motorist to proceed from Bond to Newport without stopping. We believe the neighborhood would support the following:
 - More chicane measures on critical streets
 - A street redesign of Columbia at Commerce to prevent motorists from the mixed-use zone from using the Columbia to travel northward through a local neighborhood. At the CTAC workshop for RWNA and ABNA, Robin Lewis mentioned there had been some consideration in the past of realigning

Columbia to turn westward at Commerce to convey the motorists westward to 14th instead of traveling through the local neighborhood. Having Columbia south of Commerce “T” into Commerce and paving Commerce is a worthy project. Columbia north of Commerce would “T” at Albany Street.

- b. Completion of yellow striping and signage to prevent vehicles from parking too close to intersections.
- c. Placement of crosswalk bar (striping) at critical street crossings. Plus, some of the more dangerous crossings need flashing warning signs and should be lighted at night.
- d. Adequate parking requirements for future development to prevent the existing overparking from getting worse. This documented parking over-utilization of the local streets is a safety issue and not just an inconvenience. [At our last board meeting, our City Council liaison felt a residential parking district would solve the problem, but a review of Rick Williams’ 7-page draft on residential parking districts demonstrated it would make no improvement.]
- e. Consistent application of sight distance at intersections – The Bend Development Code has a “clear vision” standard which was to prevent landscaping to interfere with the sight distance at intersects including alleys and parking lot accesses. Another code requires structures such as buildings, walls or monument signs to be set back to allow a minimum “clear site distance” at these intersections. However, when citizens ask to paint curbs yellow to “match” these two standards to prevent vehicles from parking into the “clear vision” or clear sight distance, staff rejects the request. Vehicles (including tall trucks and vans) are parking right up the intersections obscuring the “clear vision” / “clear site distance”. The result is a motorist takes risks when entering the typical narrow Bend street which the code intended to prevent.
- f. Speed limit appropriate for the local neighborhood. We believe there would be neighborhood support for a 20-mph speed limit.
- g. Enforcement is nearly non-existent.
- h. Completion of the Galveston Corridor design. We are expecting the delivery of a study by HDR which evaluates the weaving on Galveston between Columbia and Harmon. Our members are opposed to a mini-roundabout at Columbia/Harmon because; a) It encourages the use of Columbia as a cut-through and b) the “skewed” mini-roundabout has geometry issues and the resultant design is less safe than the current design authorized by Council. We look forward to working with the engineering division to solve the “weaving” problem later this spring.

2. RWNA survey – We had two goals in mind when we conducted this survey:

- The mission of a neighborhood association is to be a conduit for passing information to members and then collecting the members responses. Distribution of information to members is the easy task, but gathering responses from members is more challenging. RWNA had not conducted a survey since 2017. The topic of the TSP’s possible

neighborhood level projects seemed like an excellent test run. This survey was a test of the effectiveness of surveys.

- We believe the TSP update is the hot topic for 2019-2020. Our members need to know what the TSP might contain and the impact to them of the updated plan. The background knowledge might come in handy when the strategies to pay for the plan's projects are presented to the public.

The results of the survey are posted online at [\[copy a link to the website\]](#). We have made the following observations:

- a. Our survey didn't have the participation we had hoped. Only about 7 % of our membership took the time to fill out the survey. The board sees this response as a challenge to find ways to improve participation. With only 7 % participation, we feel it is questionable that the results can be considered a valid statistical sampling.
- b. Our second observation mirrors our observation about the outreach workshops. Many of the questions presented lack any background such as cost, constructability and unintended consequences. As a result, we took most of the results with a grain of salt.
- c. The few results we thought might be meaningful were:
 - The majority of the responses were in favor of the Drake Park bridge, sidewalks on Newport, Bike lanes on Colorado, Greenwood Avenue road diet and the pedestrian/bike overpass of the parkway and railroad tracks.
 - The majority were not in favor of lowering the mobility standards (This is the one question that was not taken from the outreach workshops. It comes from CTAC meeting #8.) We have begun communicating with DBBA and believe this is a major concern to them. (FYI, DBBA falls within RWNA's boundary.)
- d. In the end, we concluded the workshops and our survey were both flawed because participants were asked to make choices with little or no background on the proposals including, but not limited to, the cost, the constructability, and the effectiveness.

In closing, we see this survey and the workshops as "trial runs" and recognize the need for additional education on the elements of the TSP and MPO before we can truly know how an informed community feels. We understand Phase III looks into some of these issues and suggest that further outreaches are warranted. There have been presentations made by members of the CTAC and staff for other organizations and there will be a day when RWNA will have a function to provide CTAC/Staff and members to discuss the details of the TSP and MPO.

If you have any questions, please give me a call or email

Sincerely,

Mike Walker
RWNA Vice-chair (interim chair)