

Monroe Street Neighborhood Greenway Concept Plan Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #2

Wednesday, October 29, 2014

Community Meeting Room, Public Safety Building – 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Summary Notes

NEEDS MEMO PRESENTATION

The consultant team made a presentation to review the Draft Needs and Opportunities Memo.

- **OR 224 intersection**

There were questions about the OR 224 intersection. Cut-through traffic on Monroe Street has been a long-standing concern in the Historic Milwaukie neighborhood. Currently, signs on OR 224 direct motorists to use Monroe Street to reach Downtown Milwaukie, which results in truck traffic even with posted restrictions. A right-in/right-out diverter could work in this location, but on what side of OR 224 would it be installed? Options include restricting access from OR 224 to Monroe Street westbound, eastbound, or in both directions.

- **Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) crossing**

The lack of stop control on Oak Street at the T-intersection with Monroe Street and Railroad Avenue leads to safety concerns, especially for pedestrians. When discussing potential roundabout options, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) had questions about whether a roundabout could be constructed in conjunction with a separated path for pedestrians and bicyclists. There are roundabout designs that include ramps to allow cyclists to access a sidepath around the roundabout. The crosswalks can also be setback some distance from the roundabout to increase pedestrian visibility. It was confirmed that the plan does not see reducing volumes across the UPRR tracks on Oak Street as a viable option, so separation will be key here.

- **Linwood Avenue intersection**

The PAC expressed concerns about the wide curb radius at the southwest corner of the intersection and asked if modifications could be made to tighten this corner to slow vehicles down while also providing pedestrian accommodations. The PAC also questioned whether a full signal or roundabout could be considered at that location; there are benefits to each approach.

- **Other ideas/issues**

- A member of the public suggested the plan consider a Monroe/Washington one-way couplet between Downtown and OR 224 with bike lanes on each street. This individual also added that the hill at 28th Avenue impacts sightline visibility for motorists crossing Monroe Street at this location, requiring them to pull past the curb to see cross-traffic. High speeds on Monroe Street can also create safety impacts.
- One PAC member suggested a diverter at roughly 25th Avenue, to require traffic from nearby residential properties to head west towards Downtown and reduce volumes eastbound (uphill).
- Changes to bus service patterns in Milwaukie may result in increased commuter parking near the light rail station in order to avoid a bus-train transfer and could impact Monroe Street traffic volumes.
- One PAC member suggested that sidewalks to Linwood Elementary School were needed on Stanley Avenue (future designated neighborhood greenway) and that the offset intersection at Stanley Avenue is tricky to navigate for pedestrians but is also difficult to improve.

MAP EXERCISES

Participants were divided into 3 groups based on where they were sitting. As an exercise in becoming more familiar with both the challenges of Monroe Street and the range of tools that could help make the street into a neighborhood greenway, each group was randomly assigned a specific segment of the Monroe Street route and given a set of “tool cards.” The group participants spent about 30 minutes discussing the most important problems along their street segment and identifying which specific tools would present the most effective solutions. At the end of the exercise, representatives from each group reported back to the whole gathering. The following are summaries of those group reports—they do not represent any official recommendations from the PAC as a whole.

- **West Segment (21st Ave to OR 224)**

- This group suggested a right-in/right-out diverter at OR 224 and semi-diverter at 25th Avenue to reduce traffic volumes.
- Sidewalks are in need of repair and widening with ADA-accessible curbs, except for the area immediately near the light rail station.
- Wayfinding signage and sharrows are needed throughout the entire length of the street.
- A median diverter with refuge islands is recommended at OR 224 to prevent through movements on Monroe Street, as well as restricting left turns from OR 224.
- Bike signal detection and actuation systems should be installed at the OR 224 intersection.
- There may be community concerns over potential loss of access, especially to businesses/offices east of OR 224.

- **Central Group (OR 224 to 42nd Ave)**

- This group suggested a shared-use path through the UPRR crossing to separate bicycles from motorists.
- A traffic circle or roundabout could be placed at the T-intersection just east of the railroad crossing.
- A recommended partial closure diverter at 37th Avenue is intended to eliminate through-traffic on Monroe Street and reduce traffic volumes while maintaining on-street parking where possible. There was some discussion about the type of diverter that should be used due to impacts to downhill cyclists, who might be traveling at a high rate of speed.
- A diverter is also recommended at 42nd Avenue and Monroe Street, either a median or partial closure diverter.
- There may be community concerns over diversion potentially increasing congestion on Harrison Avenue and King Road, impacting access to shopping and impacting on-street parking on Monroe Street. These neighborhood greenway treatments may also be unfamiliar to Milwaukie residents, which will require education to minimize confusion.

- **East Group (42nd Ave to Linwood Ave)**

- This group acknowledged that this segment is by far the most expensive to improve due to the lack of adequate infrastructure. Therefore, decisions were made to reduce cost—for example, a paved walkway was chosen to provide pedestrian access over sidewalk and curbs, and green street elements were chosen over conventional drainage systems. The paved walkway is considered most critical at the 52nd Avenue intersection where there are major visibility and speeding concerns.
- On-street parking would be preserved to narrow street and reduce travel speeds, although most residences have off-street parking. The path would ideally be protected from the roadway to increase safety and prevent motorists from parking on it.
- A partial closure diverter is recommended at 42nd Avenue and Monroe Street, similar to what the Central group decided.
- At the Home Avenue intersection, a traffic circle and curb extensions could be installed to calm traffic.
- Further east, reducing curb radii at the Linwood Avenue intersection with curb extensions will improve the pedestrian experience and reduce the speeds of motorists turning south onto Linwood Avenue. Installing a median diverter with refuge islands and a rapid flash beacon with push-button or passive detection at this intersection would help bicycles and pedestrians get safely across.
- In general, eliminating the centerline, installing speed humps and sharrows, and reducing the speed limit to 20 mph are all good ideas in this segment.
- There may be community concerns over lack of access due to diverters at 42nd and Linwood Avenues, which would alter local travel patterns and could cause congestion on other local streets. There may also be issues with constructing a paved shoulder for pedestrians that will likely conflict with front yards encroaching on the public right-of-way.