

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF  
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2008

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, October 6, 2008 at 6:41 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Lundberg, Wylie, Ballew, and Woodrow. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Councilors Ralston and Pishioneri were absent (excused).

1. Report on Roundabouts in Springfield.

Traffic Engineer Brian Barnett presented the staff report on this item. Intersections may be uncontrolled or have YIELD signs or STOP signs on one or more approaches, or may have a traffic signal or a roundabout. An intersection study is used to determine the appropriate traffic control to facilitate access, safety, efficiency, and to limit environmental impacts while considering the best cost/ benefit and surrounding land uses. Vehicle user costs and City maintenance costs are considered. Uniform and consistent application of the traffic control strategies is important to maintain a manageable driver work load and not violate the expectations of the driver. The result is the orderly and safe flow of traffic. The intersection studies may be very simple and rely upon volume data collected by hose counts, field observation of traffic using the intersection, and measurements of sight lines and distances. More complex intersections will have additional study of available alternatives including right-of-way available, traffic volume and distribution, sight distances, number of lanes, function of the street, crash data, speed limits, presence of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, school buses and trucks, and the surrounding land use context.

Springfield's five single lane and one multi-lane roundabouts are performing very well. Most citizen comments are favorable. Driver delay, queues, and congestion are very low. Our public education effort in 2006 and early 2007 was well received and we renewed our outreach immediately prior to the opening days of the RiverBend hospital in August 2008.

Crashes are absent from the three roundabouts on Maple Island Road and at South 42<sup>nd</sup> Street at Jasper Road. Crashes at 58<sup>th</sup> Street and Thurston Road average about 1.3 per year or about 40% of the frequency prior to installing the roundabout. Injury frequency has diminished to 10% of prior experience. Crash frequency at the single lane roundabouts compares favorably to two STOP controlled intersections with similar volume of traffic where crash frequency was about 2.2 per year. Following the opening of the Parkway roundabout on October 6, 2006 five crashes were reported in the remaining three months of the year for an annual rate of 20 crashes per year. Crash frequency in 2007 declined to 13 for the year as drivers have become familiar with the intersection. Injury crashes occurred at a rate of 2.4 incidents per year in 2007. Crash data is not

available for 2008 but is expected to continue to decline. The frequency of driver errors and by extension crash frequency is expected to be highest in the period immediately after opening the roundabout (See Attachment C in the agenda packet). Crash frequency at Parkway roundabout compares favorably to four signal controlled intersections with similar volumes of traffic where six years of data was analyzed. Crash frequency was 6.0 per year and injury frequency of 3.0 incidents per year at the signalized intersections. Injury severity is generally higher at high speed locations typical of signalized intersections.

The MLK Parkway project area's land is not yet annexed. This has discouraged the Police Department from enforcing traffic laws and an invaluable education opportunity is missing. While the public education plan was sound and was faithfully implemented it could not be expected to reach everyone. Police officer contact with traffic law violators to provide immediate education and enforcement of proper behavior is expected to reap additional safety benefits.

Councilor Woodrow said the MLK Parkway roundabout had done well, better than he expected.

Councilor Lundberg said she did sometimes get into the wrong lane in the roundabout at that location and constantly had to think about her positioning far in advance of approaching the roundabout. She noted the added turn with Wayside Loop coming into that roundabout.

Mr. Barnett said Wayside Loop did cause a complication at that site. If Wayside Loop was ever disconnected from that intersection, it could improve that situation. Even with that extra leg, the roundabout did perform rather well. The fact that drivers had to think when entering the intersection was one of the reasons it was a safer intersection.

Councilor Lundberg said education was the key and should continue even now. She suggested putting signs with arrows long before the intersection.

Councilor Ballew said she was having difficulty seeing oncoming cars as she entered the roundabout due to landscaping that was overgrown.

Mr. Barnett said they were working with maintenance to trim where appropriate.

Mayor Leiken said he had come to appreciate roundabouts more. He asked if there was anything Mr. Barnett wanted to hear from the Council. As proposals came forward for future roundabouts, Council was going to rely on staff for the engineering information.

Mr. Barnett said he appreciated Council's engagement in the roundabouts to date. He wanted Council to remain comfortable and he would continue to provide analysis. There may be situations where a roundabout would be the norm.

Mayor Leiken asked Council if they wanted to remain engaged in this as new roundabouts were proposed, or if they were comfortable with staff making that decision.

Mr. Grimaldi said Council had been engaged with City projects on public streets. We were now starting to see roundabouts discussed during project development, such as Marcola Meadows. Staff wanted to make sure Council was comfortable with staff proceeding on those types of intersections. If not, staff could first come to Council with those proposals.

Councilor Lundberg said she would prefer to continue to be involved because there was often additional land involved. Roundabouts were something that did not work for every situation.

Councilor Wylie referred to Attachment 2, page 1 which outlined the benefits of roundabouts. Lives were saved and that was important. Other benefits were also important. She had recently been through the MLK Parkway roundabout and was amazed at how smoothly the roundabout handled a lot of traffic.

Councilor Ballew asked about signage. She said for traffic heading west on Hayden Bridge Road on the inside lane the sign pointed to the left and was confusing, as it looked like you could make a direct left rather than going around the roundabout to go left. She noticed someone that had done that.

Staff made note of that location.

Mayor Leiken said he appreciated that staff had gone out to RiverBend when they opened to educate the employees about the roundabout. He was supportive and appreciative of the ongoing education piece. On significant roundabouts, Council should be included, but perhaps not on routine roundabouts, such as the one at 58<sup>th</sup> and Thurston.

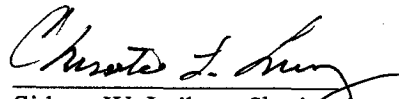
Mr. Grimaldi said when proposed roundabouts came up, staff would notify Council to see if they wanted to be involved.

Councilor Lundberg discussed the importance of face-to-face education regarding roundabouts. She asked staff to look at resources for publicity for that education.

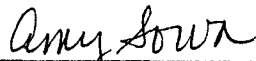
#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

  
Sidney W. Leiken      Christine Lundberg  
Mayor                      Council President

Attest:

  
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Amy Sowa  
City Recorder