

MEMORANDUM**CITY OF SPRINGFIELD**

DATE OF WORK SESSION: January 20th, 2010**TO:** Committee for Citizen Involvement**PLANNING COMMISSION
TRANSMITTAL
MEMORANDUM****FROM:** David Reesor, Senior Transportation Planner**SUBJECT:** Public Involvement Plan Review for Franklin Blvd. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Study

ISSUE: The City of Springfield has begun the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in preparation of potential federal funding for the reconstruction of Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood. The attached Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is provided for the Committee for Citizen Involvement review and approval.

DISCUSSION: Between May 2007 and March 2008 the City of Springfield led the Franklin Boulevard Study, which considered and evaluated improvements to Franklin Boulevard/McVey Highway in an area that extended from Interstate-5 (I-5) to the west, the Springfield Bridges to the east, the Willamette River to the north, and Nugget Way to the south. This study identified potential alternative concepts for the proposed Franklin Boulevard Redevelopment (Franklin) project.

The City, in partnership with Lane Transit District and Oregon Department of Transportation, is now preparing to conduct environmental analysis and documentation for the proposed Franklin project. This public involvement plan (PIP) has been developed based on the assumption that this project will be classified as an Environmental Assessment (EA).

The overall goal of this PIP is to provide a framework for the City of Springfield to develop transportation improvements for Franklin Boulevard and McVey Highway between I-5 and the Franklin / McVey intersection in partnership with Glenwood area stakeholders, community interest groups, relevant agencies, elected officials, interested individuals and parties, and those community members who are impacted by the overall project or who use the public transportation system in the project area. The PIP outlines an approach to work with and engage these groups, provide for full consideration of public input and jurisdiction/agency coordination in decision-making, and assure compliance with NEPA public involvement requirements.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the general process, concepts and activities outlined in the attached Public Involvement Plan be approved by the Committee for Citizen Involvement.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Committee for Citizen Involvement is requested to review and approve, not approve, or approve with modifications, the proposed Public Involvement Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Public Involvement Plan

Franklin Boulevard Redevelopment Project
NEPA Analysis and Findings: Phase 1

DRAFT PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Prepared for
City of Springfield

December 2009

Section 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1 Project Introduction and Background

Between May 2007 and March 2008 the City of Springfield led the Franklin Boulevard Study, which considered and evaluated improvements to Franklin Boulevard/McVey Highway in an area that extended from Interstate-5 (I-5) to the west, the Springfield Bridges to the east, the Willamette River to the north, and Nugget Way to the south. This study identified potential alternative concepts for the proposed Franklin Boulevard Redevelopment (Franklin) project.

The City, in partnership with Lane Transit District and Oregon Department of Transportation, is now preparing to conduct environmental analysis and documentation for the proposed Franklin project. This public involvement plan (PIP) has been developed based on the assumption that this project will be classified as an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA will study the potential impacts of the proposed build alternative(s). The EA is anticipated to focus on modern urban standards improvements on a ¾ mile segment of Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood between I-5 and the Franklin/McVey intersection. The proposed project is a hybrid multi-way boulevard/arterial roadway with both roundabout and signalized intersections. The project would provide facilities for bicycles and pedestrians and improve EmX bus rapid transit through the corridor with dedicated guideway service with median and/or curbside stations.

In addition to the build alternative(s), a No-Build Alternative will also be studied in the EA.

1.2 Franklin Boulevard Study Problem Statement

Franklin Boulevard is the major east-west route within the Glenwood community and one of only four east-west arterials in the region that connect Eugene and Springfield. It is an important gateway to Eugene, downtown Springfield, the University of Oregon, and Glenwood. Franklin Boulevard is a five lane roadway with frequent business accesses and bus rapid transit service that operates in mixed traffic. The corridor has sidewalks in some places, but they are narrow and often located on private property or easements.

The Glenwood area, the City of Springfield's first urban renewal district, is poised for extensive redevelopment. The principal focus for redevelopment has been near the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and the McVey Highway. The proposals for this area, first outlined in the Glenwood Riverfront Plan, favor higher density, mixed-use

development oriented toward the river. In their present form, neither Franklin Boulevard nor McVey Highway supports these redevelopment goals. Limited transportation dollars combined with the high cost of facility improvements will make these improvements a challenge to deliver.

The current condition and appearance of both corridors is widely perceived as an impediment to the area's economic renewal. Franklin Boulevard's visual environment is defined by frequent access points, unappealing and competing signage, minimal landscaping, inefficient land development and unorganized parking. The Willamette River, a significant environmental asset, is largely ignored and disconnected from the adjacent corridors and neighborhoods.

The existing Franklin Boulevard right-of-way is constrained. Any future improvements will require widening the right-of-way, and any widening of Franklin Boulevard will require property acquisition. Some owners of existing businesses are concerned that improvements will either deprive their property of all economic value or devalue their property by making it unsuitable to current uses. Some residents and property owners are concerned that plans that encourage redevelopment of parcels and relocation of current uses will change the community fabric and ultimately harm Glenwood. Many stakeholders are excited about redevelopment opportunities in Glenwood and see improvements to Franklin Boulevard as an important way to invigorate the area.

Franklin Boulevard serves a wide-range of transportation modes including through and local car and truck traffic, transit, bikes and pedestrians in a constrained right-of-way. In the future, Franklin Boulevard will continue to be a key regional arterial and will need to accommodate 30,000-35,000 cars and trucks each day and offer sufficient mobility and accessibility to support growth in both local and regional traffic, as well as a substantial increase in bike and pedestrian trips. McVey Highway will need to accommodate a similar mix of local and through trips. Both corridors have a variety of access management, parking, connectivity, safety and operational issues that require correction or improvement.

The intersections of Franklin Boulevard/McVey Highway and Franklin Boulevard/Glenwood Boulevard will need to accommodate anticipated increased traffic volumes. The McVey Highway/Franklin Boulevard intersection today is a "T" configuration; in the future, a fourth intersection leg is planned to allow for access north into the riverfront area. The Glenwood Boulevard/Franklin Boulevard intersection is the area's gateway from I-5 and will need to accommodate traffic generated from new uses in the broader area including the Glenwood Riverfront and a new University of Oregon basketball arena.

Franklin Boulevard is a bus rapid transit corridor, where buses operate in mixed traffic. Lane Transit District has built temporary bus rapid transit stations that can be replaced

in their current locations or rebuilt in new locations. Any design for the corridor must accommodate bus rapid transit stations that support future land uses.

1.3 Project Alternatives and Impact Analysis

During the Franklin Boulevard Study, the project team and the study's Stakeholder Advisory Committee worked together to develop a problem statement for the project and an evaluation framework for comparing improvement alternatives. Thirteen design concept alternatives were developed during a three-day project workshop. Alternatives that met design standards were evaluated according to their performance in the following categories:

- **Cost** (project costs and land acquisition)
- **Natural environment** (sustainability, relationship to the river, environmental impacts)
- **Community values and economic development** (multimodal access, development potential, impacts to the existing business community)
- **Transportation performance** (freight, intersection performance, local and regional traffic)

A brief summary of the public involvement activities completed as part of the Franklin Boulevard Study is included for reference in Attachment A.

Section 2.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

2.1 Public Involvement Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of this PIP is to provide a framework for the City of Springfield to develop transportation improvements for Franklin Boulevard and McVey Highway between I-5 and Brooklyn Street **in partnership** with Glenwood area stakeholders, community interest groups, relevant agencies, elected officials, interested individuals and parties, and those community members who are impacted by the overall project or who use the public transportation system in the project area. The PIP outlines an approach to work with and engage these groups, provide for full consideration of public input and jurisdiction/agency coordination in decision-making, and assure compliance with NEPA public involvement requirements by:

- Further building upon communications and information gathered through previous public involvement efforts;
- Using a variety of timely and easily understood information and outreach activities to solicit public and agency input;
- Conducting targeted outreach to ensure input from environmental justice populations (see Environmental Justice Outreach below);
- Providing convenient and meaningful public and agency involvement opportunities with ample notification and access for anyone who chooses to participate;
- Clearly identifying, documenting, and addressing the public's issues, concerns and future needs for the roadway—early in the project development process;
- Educating the public and stakeholders regarding the existing conditions, projected needs and related technical issues affecting alternative development;
- Further developing the Purpose and Need statement, goals and objectives, and evaluation criteria for the project; and
- Providing clear written and visual information to effectively convey project issues, needs, and alternatives.

The public involvement activities to be completed for the EA build on earlier public involvement efforts associated with the previous Franklin Boulevard Study and related planning and environmental studies in the project area. Due to this work, the public involvement efforts for this EA will focus on confirming and working through issues raised during these previous efforts and gathering and addressing additional comments and concerns on the Build and No-Build Alternatives.

2.1.1 Public Involvement Team

The project's public involvement team will oversee and implement this PIP. The PI team will include representatives from the City of Springfield, Lane Transit District, ODOT, URS and JLA Public Involvement. The PI team will meet regularly, as determined by the project team.

2.2 Public Involvement Issues

Based on previous concerns raised, we anticipate that the public will likely focus on the following key project issues:

- Right-of-way acquisition, including impacts to businesses and residences and potential business displacements
- Business access and parking
- Roadway width
- Acceptance of roundabouts
- Project cost
- Safety and accessibility of bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Impacts of redevelopment in Glenwood on existing businesses and residents

2.3 Public Involvement Activities

The public involvement activities summarized in this plan are organized into public outreach tools and public input strategies. The primary focus of the tools is to share information with the public. The primary focus of the input strategies is to gather input from the community.

2.3.1 Public Outreach Tools

- **Stakeholder database.** A stakeholder database will be maintained and will build on the list created during the Franklin Boulevard Study. Stakeholders will be able to self-register for the database on the project Web site, or request to be added via telephone or email. Interaction history (i.e., mailings sent, phone calls made/received, meetings attended, etc.) will be part of the information collected for each new entry. Initial known stakeholders and interest groups in the area include: property occupants and owners adjacent to the project area, former members of the Franklin Boulevard Study Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Glenwood Citizen Advisory Committee, elected officials, partner agency staff, Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Economic Development Agency, Lane County, Glenwood Water District, City of Eugene, University of Oregon, Metropolitan Planning Organization and individuals attending public meetings for the Franklin Boulevard Study.

- **Project Identity.** Due to the large number of other transportation related planning and construction projects in the area, it is important to distinguish this project for better and clearer communication with the public. A distinct project logo will be developed and used on all project information materials.
- **Project Newsletters.** Up to three (3) project newsletters will be published during the project's NEPA phase. The newsletters will provide updates on the EA, provide community context to the study, and seek public input. Newsletters will be published electronically on the project Web site, mailed to those on the stakeholder database, and be available at open houses and other community events and venues.

The first newsletter will introduce the project, provide the purpose and need, describe the proposed build alternative(s), provide a project schedule, announce a potential kick-off open house (if needed), list public events where project information will be presented, and invite the public to participate in project survey, available both online and through postage paid survey cards. A second newsletter will provide an update on the EA and invite the public to attend a public hearing and provide comments on the EA. A third newsletter may be sent mid-project, or at the end of the NEPA phase, as necessary.

- **Fact Sheets and Handouts.** Fact sheets and handout materials will be prepared for use at small group meetings, speaker's bureaus and other public events.
- **Public Displays and Signage.** Project signage will be used to alert users of Franklin Boulevard to the project. We anticipate using very short messaging that directs commuters to the project Web site. Displays and signage can also be used to reach EmX transit users on or inside buses. Bicyclists and pedestrians may be reached through signs on pathways or on existing displays in Alton Baker Park.
- **Media Relations, Advertising and Press Releases.** Outreach to the media is a proactive element in maintaining a positive image for the project, informing stakeholders about the EA, and encouraging their participation. The project team will work with City public relations staff to develop an appropriate media strategy for the project and prepare supporting materials, such as media kits and press releases, as necessary.

The public involvement team will develop newspaper advertisements and press releases announcing the open house and public hearing.

- **Comment Forms and Tracking.** Comment forms will be provided at all public and small group meetings and at key locations in the community, such as DariMart, local restaurants, etc., to encourage participants to provide their comments on the project. A comment form will also be available for 24/7 feedback on the project Web site.

A comment tracking database will be created and will contain all comments submitted to the project team (formal and summary comments from meeting reports and public contacts). Every comment will be classified by relevant issue. The issue codes will be used to analyze public opinion. Meeting notes and Web site comments will be coded for consistent entry into the comment database.

In addition, comments received during the Franklin Boulevard Study will be identified and addressed by the project team during the project development process.

2.3.2 Public Input Strategies

- **Stakeholder and Property/Business Owner Interviews.** Stakeholder and property/business owner interviews will be conducted early in the project to identify concerns and suggestions relating to project process, decision-making and potential impacts. Findings from these interviews will be used to finalize the PIP and maximize public involvement throughout the process. It is anticipated that up to ten (10) stakeholder interviews will be held by JLA, with additional stakeholder interviews held by city staff. Stakeholder interviews may include members of the Franklin Boulevard Study Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Glenwood Citizen Advisory Committee, area business community representatives, residents, transit users and agency staff. In addition to these broader stakeholder interviews, city staff will meet individually with all property and business owners along the corridor.
- **Project Web Site and Surveys.** A project Web site will be established to provide information and gather input from the public via electronic comment forms and online surveys. The Web site will be a primary tool for public outreach and will be updated regularly. The site address will be publicized widely in project public outreach materials and the public involvement team will look for opportunities to include the project Web site address on other community and agency partner's Web sites. Because of the likelihood that environmental justice populations are present in this area—and that they may not have ready access to electronic information, the surveys and other materials provided on the Web site will also be provided through other venues (see Environmental Justice Outreach below).
- **Stakeholder Listening Sessions and Briefings.** Small group listening sessions will be one of the primary means of sharing information and gathering public input through the course of the project. The public involvement team will engage both organized groups and unaffiliated stakeholders with common interests (i.e. business owners and operators, bicycle/pedestrian interests, etc.) through small group sessions. Early goals of these listening sessions will be: a) introducing the project; and b) understanding stakeholder expectations of the project and the public process. As the project progresses, listening sessions will likely be replaced

- **Concurrent Process Coordination.** The project team will present project information and collect public input at other area project committee meetings (for example the citizen committee for the Glenwood Refinement Plan and the Glenwood Urban Renewal Advisory Committee) and open houses. The team will also make relevant information from other projects available at Franklin events. A graphic illustrating other proximate projects is included as Attachment B. Representatives may attend up to four (4) related events in the course of the project.
- **Speaker's Bureau.** Organizations, such as the Lions Club, Kiwanis, etc., can request a speaker at their meetings to discuss the project. This opportunity will be posted on the project Web site and included in project newsletters. The primary speakers will be city project staff. JLA and URS project staff will also be available to speak at these events, as needed.
- **Environmental Justice Outreach.** Initial research indicates that the project is located in an area that has low income Environmental Justice (EJ) populations.¹ To meet EJ requirements, special outreach will be conducted in an effort to obtain input from these protected populations and other protected populations that may be identified. These efforts will include:
 - Identifying the locations of potential minority and low income populations. Methods will include review of Census information specific to minorities, low income and elderly populations, as well as field surveys to identify potential protected populations (to be performed by the project Socioeconomist).
 - Actively seeking a stakeholder(s) on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (if formed) to represent low income and other potentially identified EJ populations who could be impacted by the project.
 - Targeted mailing/canvassing of the project newsletters and impact information to EJ populations;
 - Interviewing EJ populations regarding this project and how to most effectively communicate with them;
 - Ensuring distribution through venues oriented to non-English-speaking and low-income populations; and
 - If non-English-speaking populations are present, providing translations of project newsletters, flyers announcing the public hearing, the EA Executive Summary, and other documents, as appropriate.
- **Open House.** A public meeting to kick off the project will be held to review the project's purpose and need and affirm the alternatives under consideration.

¹ Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* forms the basis for environmental justice policies in the United States. It requires Federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects (including social and economic effects) of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

Information related to the specific public involvement issues identified in section 2.2 would also be provided (i.e. information on roundabouts, general business relocation program information, etc.) Up to one (1) additional open house can be held during the project, if necessary.

- **Public Hearing.** The public hearing on the EA will use an open house format with scheduled project presentations and the opportunity to provide written comments or oral testimony.

2.4 NEPA-Compliant Documentation

Documents created throughout the implementation of the public involvement plan will be compiled into a public involvement technical memorandum that will provide a historic record documenting the comments and issues developed and the decisions made through the EA process. Summaries of all public meetings, briefings and hearings will serve as documentation of those activities. The stakeholder database and comment log, discussed earlier in this document, will also be part of the record. Outreach to potential environmental justice populations will be conducted and documented.

2.5 Regulatory Agency Coordination

This project will involve coordination with agencies and jurisdictions—both those with regulatory authority (e.g., State Historic Preservation Office) and those with a particular interest in the project (e.g., Springfield police and fire departments, planning departments). Those agencies and jurisdictions with an interest in the project will be kept informed via the PIP actions identified above—and will be contacted directly for issues of key concern for their areas. Regulatory agencies will be specifically addressed as follows:

- The project will be presented to the Collaborative Environmental and Transportation Agreement for Streamlining (CETAS)² for Triage to determine whether CETAS will track this project. This project is not anticipated to have sufficient natural and cultural impacts to require full CETAS concurrence throughout the process.
- Ongoing coordination with FHWA, ODOT, Lane Transit District and FTA, as needed, will be integrated into the project development process. Specific agencies regulating technical areas will be contacted when environmental technical analysis occurs and, as needed, for permitting.

² The CETAS group was formed to foster collaboration between participating agencies to help streamline the environmental process, and to ensure the complexities of environmental regulations and planning requirements are met. The following agencies are represented on the CETAS group: ODOT, FHWA, Oregon Dept. of State Lands, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Dept. of Land Conservation and Development, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

2.6 Assumptions Used in Creating This Plan

This plan was created utilizing the following set of assumptions about the project design and schedule:

- This project is likely to be categorized as an EA. If it is categorized as a CE, many of these activities can still be done, but some of them may not be needed. This plan is intended to provide a comprehensive strategy for public involvement.
- The general alternative alignment for the project has been publicly discussed in a prior planning process. If the design changes substantially and new properties become affected, additional stakeholder outreach may be needed.
- There is likely to be only one build alternative brought forward into the EA. If new alternatives are developed later in the process, additional public open houses to document public comments on those alternatives may be required.
- Based on the assumptions set forth above, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee may not be established on this project. However, if the formation of a Stakeholder Advisory Committee is needed, it could be included as part of the plan.
- The NEPA phase of the project would be completed in summer-fall 2010. If the project is delayed, close coordination with other planning processes may not be possible.

Attachment A – Franklin Boulevard Study Public Involvement Summary

Public Involvement

Community members, stakeholders, and other interested parties actively participated in the development of the preferred concept which began in July 2007. The public involvement process kicked-off with a series of stakeholder interviews designed to help the project team understand community issues. A 15-member stakeholder advisory committee met eight (8) times during the study. The project developed alternatives through a design workshop held in August 2007. The three-day design workshop included two meetings with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and a public open house. A second public open house was held in February 2008 to review the Stakeholder Advisory Committee's final recommendation. (Franklin Boulevard Study, page 2, March 2009)

Attachment B – Concurrent Process Coordination

