Bike and Walk Salem:
Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update and Safe Routes to School Plan

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #6
June 14, 2011, 2011
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Pringle Hall Community Center, 606 Church Street SE

Attendees

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members		Project Team
1	Rodger Gutierrez, ODOT	Julie Warncke, City of Salem
2	David Fridenmaker, School Facilities Department	Kevin Hottmann, City of Salem
3	Heather Swanson, West Salem N.A.	Sue Geniesse, TGM
4	Kevin Baker, School District, Transportation	Sumi Malik, CH2M HILL
5	Jeff Leach, SESNA	Serah Breakstone, Angelo Planning Group
6	Ray Jackson, Salem Keizer Area Transportation Study	Rory Renfro, Alta Planning + Design
7	Michael Wolfe, South Salem Cycleworks	Judith Johnduff, City of Salem
8	David Fox, Planning Commissioner	
9	Bill Cummins, Disabled Service Provider	**Citizens in Attendance**
10	Tonya Johnson, Marion County Health Department	Eric Lundgren, Mid-Willamette Valley BTA Elizabeth Potter, Friends of Pioneer Cemetery Jen Akeroyd Penny Ruiz, Friends of Pioneer Cemetery

Meeting Summary

This meeting summary documents the conversation from the June 14, 2011 meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) for Bike and Walk Salem, the City of Salem's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update and Safe Routes to School Plan. The summary is organized by agenda item. For details about the materials reviewed during the meeting, please see the meeting handouts[1].

[1] Meeting handouts included the meeting agenda, a hand out of preliminary plan and code amendments, and draft Memo 10 - Preferred Pedestrian Plan Alternative (distributed electronically in advance)

Agenda and Process Overview

Sumi Malik opened the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda. Sumi explained that the purpose of the meeting was to get input from the SAC on preliminary plan and code amendments and feedback on the prioritization of pedestrian projects. She noted that SAC feedback would be incorporated into the final versions of each memo. SAC members would have an opportunity to comment again when the memos are incorporated into the draft plan.

Preliminary Plan and Code Amendments

Serah Breakstone used the preliminary plan and code amendments handout to discuss preliminary amendments, topic-by-topic. SAC members were given the opportunity to respond to each topic as presented. The following section provides an overview of Serah's presentation and SAC questions and comments by topic area.

Overview

The purpose of the preliminary amendments is to facilitate the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian projects and policies. Another purpose is to comply with the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR), which has specific requirements for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

Serah explained that the City has undertaken the Unified Development Code (UDC) project, an effort to restructure and simplify the current development code. The effort is policy neutral, meaning that the project aims to reorganize and simplify code, but not change the substance of the code language. Some areas of preliminary code amendments from this planning process may overlap with amendments proposed as part of UDC project.

Code amendment recommendations that come out of the Bike & Walk Salem planning process are for consideration, and will not automatically mean the code is adopted.

Q: How will specific code amendments be handled in relation to the UDC project?

A: Some amendments could take place before the UDC project is completed and others may make more sense to do after the UDC project. It is really case-by-case.

Bike Parking Requirements

Serah explained that currently bike parking requirements are tied to Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. SIC codes were not developed for land use purposes and are awkward. The UDC project is eliminating the use of SIC codes and is streamlining use categories, which is occurring for both bicycle and vehicle parking.

Q: Is there research on how many bicycle parking spaces are recommended for each use? Do we have that knowledge?

A: The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan has a list of uses and parking guidance. Guidance also exists from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP). APBP has recommended short and long-term bike parking for various uses.

Comment: In some cases current standards are too rigid. For instance school bike parking standards require too many bike parking spaces. Opting for better quality bicycle parking over more parking spaces would be a better approach. One SAC member pointed out that this approach would be okay only if it doesn't result in less investment in bike parking and a way for schools to spend less on bike parking.

Q: What benefits does the streamlining of land use categories have to bicyclists?

A: SIC codes were not intended to be used to classify land uses. The UDC project may also separate bike parking from vehicle parking (they are now tied). It may be helpful if land use categories match, but there is no other distinct benefit. The land use categories are part of City decisions that are beyond this project.

Serah explained that she received feedback that bicycle parking requirements for schools result in too many bicycle parking spaces. She also received feedback that there is not enough long-term bicycle parking for multi-family land uses.

Q: Do the changes address bicycle parking requirements at transit park and ride lots? Some park and ride lots are informal and operate with an agreement with the Salem Keizer Mass Transit District. Will bicycle parking requirements apply to these informal park and ride lots too?

A: Informal park and ride lots are not subject to land use review and development code requirements, including those for bike parking. For formal transit park and ride lots, Serah said she is reviewing the minimum requirements and will compare the existing minimums against best practices.

Q: One SAC member did not agree that too many bike parking spots are required for schools. He asked whether requiring fewer bicycle parking spots at schools would result in increased car usage.

A: Revisions would be carefully worded to encourage and not discourage bicycle usage. Right now, the required number of bicycle parking spaces is unreasonably high. For example, a recently constructed elementary school would have required 160 bike parking spaces, which was way more than the school actually needed. A better tradeoff would be fewer bicycle parking spaces of higher quality.

Q: Would reducing the number of bicycle parking spaces be in conflict with Safe Routes to School efforts?

A: No, they would not be in conflict because an effort will be made to balance the quality and quantity of bicycle parking spots.

Q: The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) trip generation manual bases the number of trips generated on the square footage of a land uses or the number of students for a school. Isn't having a tie to a ratio logical?

A: The current standard is tied to the number of class rooms, specifically the capacity of those classrooms, not current enrollment, since enrollment changes overtime.

Comment: Current bicycle parking at grocery stores is inadequate. These are high parking turnover areas, and there isn't enough short-term bike parking at grocery stores.

A: We will evaluate the requirement for short-term bike parking at grocery stores.

Bicycle Parking Design Standards

Serah explained that currently, bicycle parking design standards have minimal standards for the location of bike parking and no standards for the type of bicycle parking racks. Currently,

standards exist for the space between racks. She recommends having specific standards that relate to the quality of bike parking to better ensure high quality bike parking.

Specific areas for bicycle parking design standards to address are: rack types, sheltering requirements, lighting, clearance, and the possibility of clustering bicycle racks. Design standards will be developed for both short and long-term bicycle parking. High quality long-term bicycle parking is covered and more secure for overnight storage. Wave racks are often used because they are cheap and appear to provide many parking spaces, and can fit into a small space. The reality is that it is difficult for two bicycles to occupy adjacent waves in the racks. Another inexpensive option is a simple staple style bicycle rack. Corral bicycle parking is a type of clustered bicycle parking that is on-street and involves converting a vehicle parking space into a corral of multiple bicycle parking spaces.

Updated design standards for bicycle parking could be placed within public works design standards and referenced in the development code. Often, it is easier to update public works design standards than it is to update the development code, so a reference in development code would allow more flexibility for updates in the future.

The determination of the ratio of long-term versus short-term bicycle parking required varies by land use. For example, grocery stores have higher parking turnover; therefore, a greater share of short-term bicycle parking makes sense in that case.

Q: Right now all bike parking is required to be within 50 feet of a public entry, and is usually placed by a front door. This doesn't always make the most sense for schools because people may ride their bikes to other places around the school grounds, like ball fields where it would be convenient to have bicycle parking. Will the location requirements allow for some flexibility?

A: We can look into that, but want to ensure that bike parking isn't placed in places that are inconvenient for children riding to school.

Q: I understand that wave racks are not desirable, but most businesses put these in because they are inexpensive and cheap to install—staple racks require more labor to install. Wave racks give the impression that many bikes can fit into that small space, which is not the case. I wonder if you'll get push back on developing standards for the quality of bike parking.

A: Perhaps, staple racks are still a relatively inexpensive option, albeit not the cheapest option.

Q: Can the design standards allow for a rail type of bike parking that doesn't require bikes to protrude into the sidewalk space? It may be nice to have this option in tight spaces. We don't want to preclude this option.

A: APBP doesn't recommend that type of solution, but it is a way to get more useable bike parking.

Bicycle Parking - Reductions to Vehicle Parking

Serah explained that an option is to reduce vehicle parking, if more bicycle parking above the base code is provided. The standard can be in the form of a ratio, the number of vehicle spots that can be reduced to the number of additional bike parking spots above the base code requirement. This option is useful in areas where you want to promote bicycle riding and bicycle parking. The additional bike parking would need to meet design standards for quality as well. The code now allows a developer to reduce the number of vehicle parking spots if that

developer demonstrates more demand for bicycle and pedestrian parking. This provision requires a conditional use application, and is used infrequently. Getting rid of the conditional use process would help increase utilization of the option to reduce vehicle parking if additional bicycle parking above base code requirements is provided. This would require a Type 2 site plan review, but the review process would be well-established with standards. For example, Costco would not be a good place for this provision because most people drive there.

Comment: I like this provision.

Connectivity - Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Currently, bicycle and pedestrian circulation is required on site; building to building for specific uses, such as multi-family uses or within overlay zones. Gaps may exist in the uses that are subject to connectivity requirements. The UDC project will be re-categorizing uses. The preliminary code amendments for the Bike and Walk Salem project recommend a new section of language to address internal and external connectivity for all uses—sub-division, multi-family, etc.—except single-family residential (SFR) or a duplex on a single lot with no other lots around it.

Mid-block crossings would be required for any block over 600 feet long. The TPR is specific in mid-block crossing requirements. The mid-block crossing type could be a signal, island, or crosswalk. The code would allow for exceptions in cases where crossing mid-block would be unsafe due to traffic speeds and volumes. ODOT has a manual that specifies the type of mid-block crossing depending on factors, such as whether or not volumes and posted speed are over a certain threshold. Other references could be used as well. In cases such as a development request for a shopping center over a certain size, the code could require the City traffic engineer's review. It is tricky to attempt to address too many situations using development code, because development applications are case-by-case. We recommend establishing a threshold at which the City Traffic Engineer's review is necessary.

Q: Lancaster Drive is a busy arterial, and technically there is a crosswalk between two public right-of-way corners at an un-signalized intersection. Would you have a marked crosswalk there?

A: We wouldn't have a crosswalk marked in that situation because it is not safe or pleasant (it would create a false sense of security).

Q: Instead of requiring the traffic engineers review for some cases, wouldn't it be better to have most development conform to a norm/standard and to allow for variance review? Variance review would be a way to build in flexibility. In West Salem there are lots of residential streets where the mid-block crossing requirement would apply. A sub-division is being required to realign Orchard Heights, which has high speeds. The code language needs to address safety factors of mid-block crossings.

A: Other cities' language allows the discretion of the City's traffic engineer, but yes, even the discretion is based on standards, such as volumes and speeds.

Connectivity – Cul-de-sacs

Serah explained that Cul-de-sacs are not allowed to be longer than 800ft. A lot of jurisdictions only allow cul-de-sacs if geographic constraints preclude a through street. Several jurisdictions

allow cul-de-sacs up to a 400ft maximum, and the origin is that fire trucks do not want to have to back up more than 400ft if they are on a cul-de-sac.

Q: Can cul-de-sacs be allowed if there is a bicycle or pedestrian connection?

A: Yes, development code can allow this bicycle and pedestrian access ways. In Forrest Grove, there are sub-divisions with cul-de-sacs that provide bicycle and pedestrian access ways. The connections provide a well-connected network. The City pointed out that where bicycle and pedestrian access ways through a cul-de-sac already exist, residents complain of security issues and vagrants or loiterers hanging out. It is better to have a full street connection to keep more eyes on the street.

Q: How would a bike boulevard treatment, a diverter that essentially creates two cul-de-sacs for cars, be treated?

A: Good question—not sure that would be considered a cul-de-sac. I don't think it applies.

Connectivity - Access to Transit

Serah explained that the TPR requires urban areas to provide convenient pedestrian access to transit when new retail, commercial or industrial uses are developed. Existing code language does not appear to directly address access to transit. To ensure TPR compliance, new language should be added. We recommend new connectivity language to include provisions for access to transit for new retail, commercial, and industrial developments.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Serah recommends an amendment that allows bicycle and pedestrian facilities to be located within a front setback. The type of facilities this amendment would allow include: bike parking and corrals, benches, and other bicycle and pedestrian amenities. Facilities would be subject to vision clearance requirements.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities - Maintenance and Liability

Serah explained that an Open House attendee asked whether an adjacent property owner or the City is responsible for maintaining staircases and off-street paths. They had the same question with respect to liability. The City is clarifying what adjacent property owner's liability is for off-street paths. Currently the city maintains stairways when the City constructs them. The project team is exploring the issue as part of this project.

Q: The bike racks by the YMCA have partially dismantled bikes locked to them. What is the City's responsibility for bikes abandoned on city streets? What is the policy?

A: City staff responded that it depends on the value of the bicycle. If the value is over a certain threshold, then the police need to be involved. If the bicycle is of low value, then the City can take action. This policy should be clarified. Determining whether or not a bicycle is abandoned is a personal property issue, and difficult to determine. The City needs to know how long it has been there before determining it is abandoned and needs to be removed. We will work with police and attorneys to determine a recommendation.

Comment: What about a tag system like the system that is used with abandoned vehicles? The downtown core is the main place where this is an issue.

A: Good idea.

Preferred Pedestrian System

Rory reminded the SAC that he introduced pedestrian projects in March. Since then potential funding sources have been identified as well. The projects are aimed to accommodate a broad range of users, able-bodied to different levels of abilities. System connectivity is desired according to public input. Connectivity to new development is important too. Maximizing user safety and comfort also ranked high in public input.

Rory first went over citywide recommendations for:

- a complete sidewalk system in Salem;
- upgrade sidewalks in poor condition;
- provide multi-modal connections, including access to transit, and wayfinding, particularly in downtown;
- implement streetscape enhancements, downtown has some great features already;
- implement green streets with stormwater collection and treatment at the street level; and
- programmatic efforts such as encouragement, education, enforcement, and evaluation.

Rory explained that we have a long list of projects, 280 individual pedestrian projects. We need to set priorities to know what to implement first.

The project team first determined the critical pedestrian routes. Earlier in the planning process, we determined Critical ADA routes. The project team used both the Critical ADA routes and an understanding of other projects that would serve pedestrian needs well to determine the Critical Pedestrian Network. The Critical Pedestrian Network is made up of the first two tiers of three project tiers.
The Critical Pedestrian Network projects were then evaluated against eight evaluation criteria, which were established early in the project and can be found in Memo #3.

Rory explained that Tiers 1 through 3 roughly represent: 0-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10-20 years. He warned SAC members not to get attached to the timeframes, because the timing of implementation can change. Instead focus on the relative differences between the tiers—what best belongs in the first tier versus second or third?

Because the timing of projects can change, this document serves as a living document, and should be periodically updated.

The maps within the memos are organized by red representing Tier 1, orange representing Tier 2, and yellow representing Tier 3, the longest term. Rory highlighted prioritized projects from each quadrant.

Within West Salem, projects along Edgewater, Wallace crossings, and Brush College Road are prioritized.

In South Salem, missing sidewalks on Commercial Street and an off-street path within Bush Park are prioritized as Tier 1 projects. Sidewalks on Madrona and River Road are prioritized as Tier 2 projects. Some Tier 3 projects are sidewalks on planned streets. Whenever these streets are developed, sidewalks would be built.

In Southeast Salem, a Tier 1 project is sidewalks on Center Street, east of Lancaster. Sidewalk connections to schools are also Tier 1 projects. A path along 25th Street is prioritized as a Tier 1 project. A path along Airway is prioritized as a Tier 2 project. This path system serves both transportation and recreation purposes.

In North/Northeast Salem, D Street, Cherry, and access to the Kroc Center are all prioritized as Tier 1 projects. Bicycle and pedestrian connections to the Kroc Center and Chemeketa Community College would serve areas with higher proportions of the transportation disadvantaged.

In the Downtown area, intersection improvements are the focus of Tier 1 projects. These intersections represent concentrations of pedestrian issues. Connections through Bush Park are again a Tier 1 priority. Long-term, Tier 3 projects are a path along Mill Creek and a riverfront path to Keizer.

The prioritization should be revisited every couple of years. This prioritization represents a snapshot in time. We need your comments on the prioritization by Monday, first thing in the morning at 8AM using the comment form. Julie will compile the comments and send them back to the consultant team with her direction and input.

Q: In determining the priorities, will we get a summary of what criteria each project does meet? Right now it is difficult to tell through the memo why one project is red and a priority.

A: A spreadsheet exists. City staff asked that the spreadsheet be shared with the SAC. Consultant team noted that the evaluation framework does not decide the prioritization of projects but is a decision-making tool. Therefore, use the spreadsheet as reference. At this point, we do not want to adjust the evaluation framework, but rather focus on the projects within each tier. Use the framework to understand our rationale, but provide us input on the prioritization of projects by tier.

Comment: For an ODOT grant application process, each project gets a number of points using evaluation criteria. This is more numerical.

A: Even numeric assignments are based on a subjective assessment and putting a number to the assessment can be almost a false level of precision. The desire would be to add up the numbers and base decisions on project totals. Again, the evaluation framework is a way to provide some objectivity to the evaluation of projects, and help understand how they meet goals, but we don't want to use it as the way decisions are made. If everyone went through and completed the evaluation framework, everyone would have a different assessment.

Q: Is the crossing over I-5 funded? Also, McGilchrist is orange, Tier 2, and it has lots of pedestrians? Why?

A: McGilchrist is an expensive project, but it is in an area of high need. None of the proposed projects are funded.
Q: What about determining potential users served per dollar of cost?

A: For 280 projects, we cannot refine the evaluation process to the same level of scrutiny as a grant application for a specific project. User demand estimates would be used at a later stage.

Rory added that the spreadsheet is a lot to understand. Memo #3 Evaluation Framework shows the rating scale for each criterion.

Q: You said that the proposed projects aren't funded, but I thought that a project to improve Glen Creek & Wallace Road intersection is funded?

A: The project which is funded does not include the additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements recommended as part of this planning process.

Q: What I see missing from the list of projects, and what would be ideal, is a long continuous path that gets people to destinations, like the Springwater Corridor in Portland. What are our aspirational corridors?

A: Along the riverfront, we are recommending a north-south corridor. We are also recommending a Geerline rail line path. The Parks Department is developing a trails plan as well, which has some aspirational trails. Within this planning effort, we tried to strike a balance between trails and on-street facilities. Trails can often times be more for recreational use. Also, several people mentioned that they would use the connection through Minto Brown Park as a way to get downtown.

Comment: The people who probably said that and responded to your online questionnaire or came to your open houses are well-to-do. You probably didn't hear from lower income people.

A: We held listening stations—we went to places where people gather to hear their thoughts on the proposed projects and priorities. We targeted places where low-income people may go.

Public Comment Period

The floor was opened up for public comments.

Eric Lundgren asked for volunteers to conduct bike counts. He explained counts are taken for 2 hours in the morning and in the evening. People can sign up for times that are convenient for them. It is useful data to have for planning and advocacy purposes.

Elizabeth Potter is with Friends of Pioneer Cemetery, a group that provides stewardship for the cemetery. Elizabeth commented that Friends of Pioneer Cemetery is watchful of any pedestrian or bicycle enhancement that may impact the cemetery. She would like her name to be kept on any notification list and she would like to be informed about the next SAC meeting. She thinks it is important that the SAC consider the impact that foot or bicycle traffic would have on the historic cemetery, which is a one-of-a kind resource.

Next Steps

The SAC was asked to provide comments on preliminary code and policy amendments and Memo #10: Preferred Pedestrian Plan Alternative by Monday, June 20th at 8AM. The SAC was asked to please use the comment forms provided and submit comments electronically to Julie. Julie will reconcile the comments and provide direction to the consultant team. Sumi said we do not yet know exactly when the next SAC meeting will be, and will keep the group informed.