

TO: Salem River Crossing Project File

FROM: Julie Warncke, Transportation Planning Manager
Public Works Department

DATE: July 1, 2015

SUBJECT: **Salem River Crossing Alternate Modes Study Implementation Overview**

The Salem River Crossing Alternate Modes Study was completed in April 2010. The purpose of this memo is to document actions identified in this study that have occurred or otherwise advanced towards implementation in the last five years.

The Alternate Modes Study included a variety of project recommendations to decrease single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel across the Willamette River in Salem. The recommendations are divided into Transportation System Management (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures. Some of the recommendations are directed to a particular entity (e.g. Salem Keizer Transit District or the City of Salem), while others would require a partnership among different jurisdictions and advocacy groups.

The relationship of the Alternate Modes Study to the Salem River Crossing Project is described on page 2 of the Alternate Modes Study, Volume 1. This study was prepared to support the assumption that the peak hour SOV travel across the Willamette River could be reduced by at least 8 percent beyond what would otherwise be predicted by the regional travel demand model. Almost all of the recommendations from this study can be implemented with or without ultimate construction of a new bridge across the Willamette River, however implementation of these recommendations does not eliminate the need to for providing additional capacity to cross the Willamette River in the Salem-Keizer area.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

The TSM recommendations are divided into two groups: (1) Bicycle and Pedestrian Recommendations, and (2) Transit Recommendations.

Bicycle and Pedestrian TSM Recommendations

The bicycle and pedestrian TSM recommendations include creating new and enhancing existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities leading to and crossing the Willamette River. The City has implemented a number of improvements over the past few years that align with these recommendations. In addition, there are a number of projects with approved funding slated to be completed within the next 5 years. Following is a summary of these enhanced bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

- **Shared Lane Markings:** The City installed shared lane markings on select streets in west Salem and downtown Salem, including Rosemont Avenue NW, Musgrave Lane NW, Wallace Marine Park, Commercial Street NE/SE (through downtown), and Chemeketa Street NE (through downtown).
- **Striped Bike Lanes:** Bike lanes and sidewalks were added to Eola Drive NW. This arterial street provides a connection from the southwestern area of west Salem to Edgewater Street NW, and from there to the existing bridges. In downtown Salem, the Urban Renewal Agency has programmed \$600,000 in the City's Capital Improvement Plan, fiscal year 2015-2016, to stripe bike lanes through downtown on High Street (southbound) and Church Street (northbound). Striping these streets with bike lanes will help expand the bicycle facility network to support increased bicycle trips across the Willamette River.
- **Develop Bike Boulevards:** In 2012, the City of Salem adopted a network of proposed "Family-Friendly Bikeway" into the *Salem Transportation System Plan (TSP)*. For the purposes of the Salem TSP, the term Family-Friendly Bikeway is synonymous with Bike Boulevard. Since this time, the City has undertaken initial steps to enhance these lower-stress bikeways, with an emphasis on routes that connect to downtown. Bike destination signs were added to key routes, including Chemeketa Street NE, Winter Street NE/Maple Avenue NE, and the Union Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge. The City has recently seen a growth in the public support for developing bike boulevards. Given the heightened interest, in June 2015, the City applied for a Transportation and Growth Management Grant to develop a concept plan for the City's first full-fledged bike boulevard. The proposed route connects the City of Keizer and ODOT's Shared Use Path along Salem Parkway to the Capitol Mall and downtown. This is an important route to connect people to the Willamette River by way of connecting bikeways on Union and Chemeketa Streets NE.
- **Union Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge – Connections:**
 - Signs connecting users to the Union Street Bridge have been added in west Salem and downtown. The bike destination signs were installed as a joint effort between the City and ODOT. In addition, pedestrian way-finding signs were installed by the Urban Renewal Agency to enhance the connections between the Edgewater District, Wallace Marine Park, the Union Street Bridge, downtown Salem, Willamette University, Bush Park, and more.
 - The intersection of Wallace Road NW (a state highway) at Glen Creek Road NW was widened in 2014. While this widening resulted in longer crossing distances for pedestrians and bicycles, the design included features to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles. In particular, the pedestrian crossing of the south leg of the intersection, which had previously been closed, is now open. Green paint was applied at locations where right turn lanes cross over bike lanes.
 - A new shared use path was constructed in 2014 as a connection between the Union Street Bridge and Glen Creek Road. This path provides a more direct and



safer route to and from the Union Street Bridge from areas north and west of Glen Creek Road.



Glen Creek Road to Union Street Pedestrian Bridge Path Illustration

- The west end of the path to the Union Street Bridge currently ends at Wallace Road NW with no crossing opportunity. The Urban Renewal Agency is finalizing a planning effort to address various needs within the west Salem business district, including transportation connectivity. While not yet adopted, one of the final recommendations from this study is to provide a grade-separated crossing of Wallace Road in line with the current pathway to the Union Street Bridge. This undercrossing would serve all modes, but would be designed to facilitate east/west bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- Plans to improve connections on the east side were refined in the 2013 Central Salem Mobility Study. The first phase will be installation of a traffic signal on Commercial at Union Street. This project is funded and in design. The second phase will extend improvements east on Union Street to connect to the Winter Street bikeway. The Urban Renewal Agency has programmed \$1.5 million in the City's Capital Improvement Plan, fiscal year 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, to advance this phase of the project.
- **Shared-Use Paths:** In addition to the new shared-use path connecting the Union Street Bridge to Glen Creek Road NW, construction is underway on a new pedestrian and bicycle bridge connecting downtown and Riverfront Park to Minto Island Park. When construction of this bridge and connecting pathway is complete, there will be over 20 miles of connecting shared-use pathways, including the network in west Salem. While this project does not directly address peak hour trips between west Salem and downtown, the creation of this shared-use path network will provide an opportunity for newer bicyclists to experience and become comfortable with the Union Street Bridge. This in turn can translate to increased use for commute trips.
- **Bicycle Parking and Repair Station:** The City increased the number of bike racks located within the downtown business district in 2012. The availability of convenient bike parking can make it easier for people to choose to bike downtown. In 2014, the City installed its first bike repair station in Riverfront Park. This facility is available to support both commuter and recreational bicyclists.
- **Safe Crossings:** The Alternate Modes Study identified three specific locations for enhanced bicycle/pedestrian crossing.
 - *Union Street NE at Commercial Street NE:* This project is funded and in design with construction scheduled for 2017. The design is based on refinement

planning that was completed in 2013, and includes installation of a new traffic signal to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian crossing of this state highway.

- *Junction of Wallace Road NW and the Union Street Bridge bicycle and pedestrian path:* Refinement planning for this need is currently underway through the West Salem Business District. Preliminary recommendation is for a grade-separated crossing. Funding will still need to be identified.
- *Wallace Road NW at Glen Creek Road NW:* This project was constructed in 2014. See description above under Union Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge, West Salem Connections.
- In addition to these intersections, the 2013 Central Salem Mobility Study identified ten downtown/Capitol Mall area intersections where double turn lanes can be reduced to single turn lanes, thereby reducing potential pedestrian conflicts. The City plans to pursue these relatively low-cost modifications over the next few years.

- **Wayfinding Signage:** The City added 9 miles of bicycle destination signs in 2012, including signs connecting users to the Union Street Bridge on both sides of the Willamette River. Pedestrian way-finding signs were added throughout downtown and in west Salem.



- **Sidewalk Infill:** The focus of this project is infill of sidewalk along feeder streets in west Salem, including Glen Creek Road NW and Orchard Heights Road NW. While there has not been progress on either Glen Creek or Orchard Heights Roads, there has been sidewalk infill on other west Salem feeder streets, including Eola Drive NW (minor arterial), 9th Street NW (local), and Gerth Avenue NW (local).

Transit TSM Recommendations

The transit TSM recommendations include both physical projects and operational changes. The recommendations focus on improving transit service to and from west Salem and further west to communities in Polk County. While these recommendations continue to be appropriate, the Salem-Keizer Transit District has undergone significant operational changes since this report was finalized. In particular, funding for transit service in the Salem area continues to be very limited. In response to funding limitations, the Transit District implemented significant service cuts in 2009, including elimination of all weekend service.

Since these service cuts, the Transit District has completed a Long-Range Regional Transit Plan (2013) and a Comprehensive Service Analysis (2014). These resulted in *Moving Forward*, a plan to revamp bus service to create a more robust system (approved by Transit Board February 2015). The first phase of *Moving Forward* is being implemented in September 2015. This phase involves significant changes to routes and frequency throughout the service area but does not require new funding. The next phase of *Moving Forward* will require new funding. Proposals for additional funding are

currently under review.

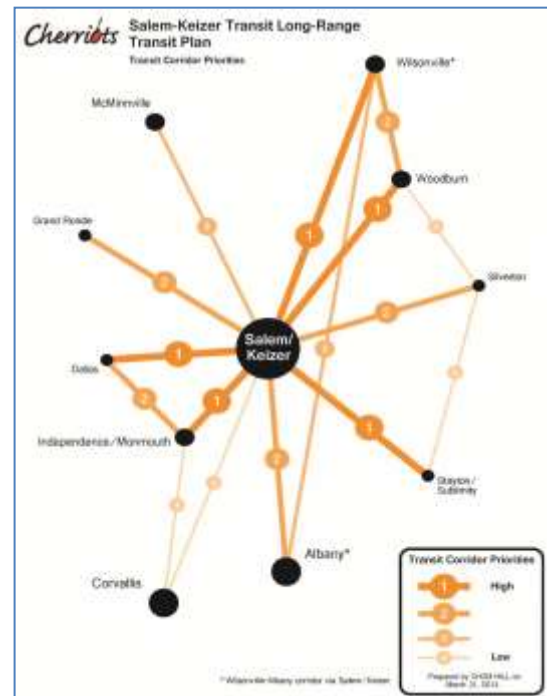
Phase 1 of *Moving Forward* increases service frequency to portions of west Salem, but also significantly reduces coverage in the lower density residential areas that occupy most of the west Salem hills. Changes associated with *Moving Forward* and other changes that align with the recommendations from the Alternate Modes Study are summarized below.

- **Edgewater District (Route 5):** Increase service frequency to 15 minutes.
- **Wallace Road (Route 6):** Increase service frequency to 30 minutes, including service to the Wallace Road Park and Ride lot.
- **Transfers:** Previously all riders bound for locations other than the Downtown Transit Center had to transfer both at the west Salem Transit Center and at the Downtown Transit Center. Riders going across the river will no longer have to transfer at the West Salem Transit Center. Additionally, riders on Route 5 going to the Capitol Mall or further east to Lancaster will not have to transfer downtown. Riders on Route 6 going to Salem Hospital or further south will also not have to transfer downtown.
- **West Salem Connector:** Ridership on the fixed route system in the west Salem hills has historically been quite low. This low ridership is likely related to several factors, including topography, residential density, socio-economics of the households in this area, and service frequency, among others. The system changes that will be implemented with phase 1 of *Moving Forward* will increase the total service hours in west Salem, but the coverage will not extend into a significant portion of the west Salem hills. In an effort to address this loss of fixed-route coverage, Cherriots has launched a one-year pilot project called the West Salem Connector (WSC). This new service is flexible: the bus comes to a point near your home when you request it, and takes you to your destination within the WSC coverage area, or connects you to a regular Cherriots bus route.



- **Long-Range Regional Transit Plan (2013) :** A key focus of this plan was on connections to outlying communities and to other transit agencies in the region with the goal to integrate service and create efficient transit connections. The plan identified transit corridor priorities. Two of the corridors west of Salem are identified as high priorities: Dallas and Independence/Monmouth.

- **Rickreall Park and Ride Project:** The Transit District obtained funding in 2010 to upgrade the Park and Ride at Rickreall. The new 40 space park and ride opened in the fall 2011. It is served by CARTS Route 50 and by Cherriots Route 2X.
- **Cherriots Route 2X:** Cherriots partners with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde to provide service to the Spirit Mountain Casino. This express route provides daily service (8 inbound and 8 outbound trips daily) to the Casino with a stop at the Rickreall Park and Ride.
- **CARTS** – The Chemeketa Area Regional Transportation System provides weekday public transit service between the Salem and the neighboring cities in Marion and Polk Counties, such as Silverton, Woodburn, Dallas, Stayton, etc. There are currently 5 CARTS routes, two of which serve cities in Polk County: Route 40 (Polk County/Salem) and Route 50 (Dallas/Salem Express). In the upcoming year, the transit district will undertake a study to review these services and routes to see if they can become more efficient and increase ridership.



Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The TDM recommendations are divided into two broad groups, TDM Implementation Strategies and TDM Concepts. The TDM Concepts are further divided into five categories, with some overlap: (1) Multi-Modal Concepts, (2) Bicycle/Pedestrian Specific Concepts, (3) Transit Specific Concepts, (4) Parking Specific Concepts, and (5) Carpool/Vanpool Specific Concepts. Cherriots Rideshare serves as the lead organization for TDM in the Salem area.

TDM Implementation Strategies

There has been some progress on advancing three of the four implementation strategies identified in the Alternate Modes Study.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator:** The City added an additional transportation planner position in 2011, thereby doubling the staff devoted to transportation planning. Both transportation planners cover all aspects of transportation planning. The new transportation planner has taken the lead on managing bike parking and implementing bicycle destination signing, among other responsibilities.
- **Transit Funding:** As discussed earlier in this memo, transit district funding continues to be limited. However, the Transit District has proactively worked to improve the effectiveness of their service and this is reflected in the coming changes identified in the *Moving Forward* plan. In addition, the Transit District has laid the groundwork for

expanding service to evenings and weekends when funding allows. This work provides a strong foundation for future funding opportunities.

- **Individualized Marketing Program:** This recommendation is for an individualized marketing program for trips between west Salem and downtown. While this has not been implemented, Cherriots is currently in progress with a similar marketing program for two other neighborhoods in Salem (NEN and Grant). The results of this program may create momentum to launch a program for west Salem.



TDM Implementation Concepts

- **One-Stop Website for Alternate Modes:** Cherriots Rideshare is finalizing a Strategic Action Plan (Summer 2015). One of the key short-term recommendations (Year 1) is to build a new website. The new website would be designed to improve program efficiencies by increasing awareness, reaching a broader geographic audience, providing electronic resources, and promoting social media tools.
- **Acknowledge and Reward Commuters:** Cherriots Rideshare offers various reward programs, often in conjunction with other rideshare entities in the Willamette Valley. For example, Cherriots Rideshare was a sponsor of *Carpool Karma*, a carpool challenge in western Oregon that ran between February 1 and May 1, 2015.



- **Education on Bike/Transit Integration:** Cherriots has information online with instructions on how to load your bike on the bus, including a brief video tutorial. In addition, they periodically bring demonstration racks to public events for people to practice putting a bike on the bus rack.



- **Employer Bicycle/Pedestrian Programs and Facilities:** Cherriots Rideshare supports employer bicycle/pedestrian programs through its network of Employee Transportation Coordinators.

- **Bicycle Encouragement:** In 2013, The City of Salem launched *Salem Sunday Streets*. This annual event promotes healthy and active living by opening up city streets for people to play, explore, and build community.
- **Bicycling and Walking Information Distribution:** In 2012, the Salem area bike map was updated through a partnership with the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Cherriots Rideshare, and the City. This was the first update since 2006. The bike map covers the Salem-Keizer metropolitan area as well as the surrounding three-county region (Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties). This map is distributed free of charge at area bike shops, traveler information centers, and at events. It is also available online. An updated version is scheduled for 2016. In 2015, Cherriots Rideshare worked with a group of students from Willamette University to create a walking map of downtown Salem. Cherriots Rideshare will be printing the map and making it available free of charge.
- **Parking changes:** The last five years have seen significant review of the City's parking management policies. This review has led to several increases in parking rates. Parking meter rates were doubled in 2013 (from \$0.75/hour to \$1.50/hour). Parking permit rates in City-owned parking garages increased based on demand, with the highest increase being 44 percent at Liberty Parkade between 2010 and 2015. Parking fines have similarly increased, with increases ranging from 25 to 300 percent.
- **Drive Less Connect:** Cherriots Rideshare participates in Drive Less Connect, Oregon's secure, easy-to-use online ride-matching tool that matches users with rides. In addition to providing online ride matching for carpools and vanpools, it can also help users find a biking partner. The number of users in the Drive Less Connect system has increased substantially in recent years, from 948 users in 2011-12 to 3674 users in 2014-15.
- **Emergency Ride Home Program:** Many area employers are registered participants of the Cherriots Rideshare Emergency Ride Home program. This program provides users of alternate modes with a ride home in the event of an emergency.

