

Monroe Street Pavement Improvement Project

Community Meeting Notes (April 1, 2014)

Background

In the summer of 2014 Monroe Street from the south side of West 1st Avenue to the north side of Blair Boulevard will be resurfaced. This project will occur with two other pavement projects: a) West 1st Avenue from the west side of Van Buren Street to the west side of Washington Street; and, b) Madison Street from the south side of West 1st Avenue to West 8th Avenue. The meeting was to discuss bicycle and pedestrian improvements to Monroe Street as identified in the city's transportation system plan (TransPlan) and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP). Both plans call for bicycle improvements. In addition, development of an enhanced crossing of West 1st Avenue on Monroe Street has been funded in 2014.

The City of Eugene Public Works project on Monroe Street includes removing and replacing broken concrete pavement panels, failed asphalt pavement, and base rock. The project will also reconstruct sidewalk access ramps in several locations.

Meeting Venue and Attendees

The meeting was held on Tuesday, April 1, 2014 at 6pm at the 4j Education Center (Auditorium). There were ten members of public in attendance including several business owners. Staff in attendance: Chuck Mueller (Project Manager), Reed Dunbar (Project Planner), Tom Larsen (City Traffic Engineer).

Meeting Notice

Postcards were sent to adjacent property owners and tenants throughout the project corridor the week of March 10th. The meeting was also noticed in the city's InMotion Newsletter, in the city's Public Meeting's Calendar, and distributed via the Whiteaker Community Council's electronic listserv.

Meeting Format

The meeting began with a formal presentation to explain the purpose of the project and present a slideshow of the project area and present recommended improvement options for Monroe Street including an enhanced pedestrian crossing of 1st Avenue. Other recommendations include reducing the crossing distances Adams Street and Jackson Street on the north side of 1st Avenue and removing the push-button signal actuator on Van Buren Street at 1st Avenue (northbound) from the right turn only lane.

Construction Schedule

Chuck Mueller, the construction project manager, was in attendance. He said that the schedule has not been determined yet, but that construction of sidewalk access ramps is likely to start in early June. Pavement will follow and should be completed in September. A summary of the schedule discussion is provided below:

- City will try to minimize impacts to businesses.
- Is there a normal M-F, 9-5 schedule? City code is 7am-7pm in residential neighborhood. What determines ratio of "residential"? Suggest you talk to neighbors and see if they are willing to accept round-the-clock construction. Night work is unlikely to happen.
- Businesses would rather work not occur M-F because that's the work schedule and busy traffic time. Understand, still have people and regulations to consider. Will investigate. Wouldn't contractors want to do it faster?

- City can investigate looking at doing half a street or half a driveway at a time. If that enables business access, it's a possibility.
- Group of businesses between railroad and 1st would like the road construction to occur around the clock if possible. Businesses willing to work together to get this done. Might need alley access (alley needs to be improved, Chuck will look into it)
- Madison - business access is a big driver of phasing. Kirk from 4j said it would be better to close the entire street in the short term and get it done at once. Chuck said the city is looking at different options. Probably do base work at once and top it off with a final top coat layer (like 5th and Blair last year).

General Comments

General comments conveyed during the meeting are listed below.

- Project needs to respect the balance of transportation options within the neighborhood. For this reason, and because there was no speeding recorded, no traffic calming is being recommended.
- Please remove the recommendation for a traffic circle on 2nd/Monroe (it is)
- There is proposed automobile diversion on Monroe at 6th and 7th:
 - There might be stacking and parking removal
 - This block (between 6th and 7th) is not comfortable for any user. Reducing traffic makes sense.
 - Probably going to have a lot of confused drivers at first; might increase traffic on streets where you do not want them
 - Do we have a way to force bicyclists into the through bicycle space? (Yes, looking at concrete or flexible bollard depending on construction schedule of West EmX)
 - If you can't get diversion in can you do a Blair treatment with the bike stencil loop detector? Yes.
 - Rode Monroe for years and didn't feel stressed about reconvening into traffic. Usually one or two cars with me. If this change happens there might be a lot of grumpy people.
- There is a proposed enhanced crossing on Monroe at 1st Avenue:
 - Does the RRFB mean that people won't stop for people in blocks that do not contain an RRFB? (It could. There is some concern that drivers get acclimated to the RRFB signal and expect people to cross only at these locations.)
 - Remove the west side crosswalk? Same statutory significance as the RRFB side. Some agreement we should encourage people to cross only on the east side.
 - Bringing the left turn back on the west side is a very good thing.
- Is concrete going back in as concrete? (Yes.)
- Adams and Jackson: probably still too wide
- 4j School District: will be redoing the loop road at 4j Learning Center this summer. Will interrupt bike/ped access to the bike path during construction. Repaving 3/4 of the loop. Scheduled to be done this summer roughly over same time period as the paving project. Not looking to improve the bike/ped connection through the parking lot
 - Some people would like a better connection between Madison Street and the bike path through the 4j parking lot
- WS Skatepark: soft opening this Friday. Likely to have traffic impacts.
- EWEB: has planned a major electrical upgrade to Grain Millers. City told them they need to be out by the middle of June. EWEB is putting in new conduit and vault for Grain Millers.
- Railroad: need to make improvements here (get concrete panels here like on Van Buren). If Monroe is bike boulevard, then need to improve the track conditions.

- How do we get better turnout for meetings like this? Last time was at library which felt out of the way, but this time it's in the neighborhood and there are not any more people here. Postcards are still a good idea.
- Happy to hear that 1st Avenue is a mill and fill, probably will go quicker. Glad to hear there is a twitter account, businesses willing to communicate construction schedule to customers. (City will coordinate to develop better electronic communication.)
- People patronizing businesses along Blair and Madison create a circulation of traffic looking for parking. Some businesses might not realize what the impacts of this construction project might be. Diversion on 6th and 7th seem like something people will care about, but don't know about yet. (City thinks this will rebalance after a while.)
- Lots of vision angle problems at intersections. There are bushes and fences, like at Madison @ 4th, that make entering traffic difficult for all travel modes. This should be looked at.

Next Steps

City staff will meet to review the notes from this meeting and any additional information provided by the public and area businesses. Based on these data a recommended design will be developed as a 90% drawing and made available to the public. Updates available at www.eugene-or.gov/pwprojects.