



TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION
March 10, 2016

Members Present:

Chairman, Ken Hohenberg (Chief of Police)	Alisha Piper (COK Traffic Technician)
Secretary, John Deskins (COK Traffic Engineer)	Doug Carl (School District)
Vince Beasley (COK Fire Dept.)	Greg McCormick (COK Planning Director)
Trevor White (COK KPD)	Ken Lattin (KPD Traffic Unit Sgt.)
Dale Daniels, Citizen Representative	Mary Heather Ames (Benton County)
Lisa Beaton (COK Attorney)	Cary Roe, Public Works Director
Jim Thaelke (Ben Franklin Transit)	

Members Absent: None

COK Staff Present:

Amy Lynch (COK PW Administrative Assist.)
Steve Plummer, (Eng. Services Manager)

Visitors Present: -

Tony Kalmbach (Ben Franklin Transit)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ken Hohenberg called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed all present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The agenda for this meeting and minutes for the December 10, 2015 meeting were provided. Motion was made and seconded to approve the December, 2015 Traffic Safety Commission meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Grant Opportunities:

Cary explained the main reason we are meeting today is to discuss two possible pending grants regarding Safe Routes to School and a Pedestrian/Bicycle grant. The current school routes were provided to everyone. The RRFB (rectangular rapid flashing beacon) is latest newer technology that really gets drivers attention at pedestrian crosswalks and we are migrating to that standard at key locations. Most of the school route situations would use that technique, primarily around elementary schools and middle schools. The bike and ped grant is more for general bike and pedestrian projects as well as high schools since the safe routes program generally doesn't cover the high schools. It's a competitive process. We need to consider

submitting as many projects as we have a basis for. The purpose of today is to get that issue on the table and identify some high priority locations. After we do that, we will form a subcommittee to include the School District, Police, Public Works and Ben Franklin Transit to study the locations identified today and make recommendations. Steve pointed out that the grant applications are due May 6th. After much discussion, some of the top locations for the Safe Routes to School Grants and Pedestrian/Bicycle Grants are listed below:

- a. **Washington and 6th** – typically in the afternoon, high school kids and other citizens are crossing that intersection at their own risk. Everyone agreed it is difficult for cars to make a left hand turn there and will avoid if possible. This is an example of a location that is not adjacent to the school but may lend itself for the bike/ped grant since it is a high school route. This would be a good place to do a count.
- b. **Hawthorne School** - Alisha was asked by a citizen why the school zone ends at the corner of John Day and Neel, as so many kids actually cross at John Day & Neel. This could be a safe route grant opportunity to consider relocating the beacons or increasing the 20 MPH School Zone length by including another crosswalk at this intersection.
- c. **Union to Edison - Paving KID Canal** – Discussion about partnering with KID to enhance this with a paved bike path. If you made improvements to the path, it would encourage more usage, and would help to prevent crime. KID has traditionally opposed pathways at open canals due to safety concerns. Since this canal is underground, that would not be an issue. It was also mentioned that the KID may be revising their stance on open canals. Steve said that this location is in our Traffic Plan. Alisha mentioned a potential for a training hall and union site that is being proposed at the terminus of this pathway at Edison Street. It would be ideal to try and obtain a pathway easement through this property if possible. Doug Carl noted that the path is not very attractive, but the kids use it regardless.
- d. **W. 4th and Union roundabout.** Traffic is usually slower at the roundabouts. This would be a good location for a crosswalk. We need to do a count and see how many are crossing. This might be hard to justify a crosswalk another 130 feet from the other crosswalk at the roundabout.
- e. **10th Avenue** - Discussion on 10th Avenue where it is three lanes, the center turn lane is very wide and the bike lanes are very narrow. Why not create a better bike lane in that area by narrowing the center lane and increasing the bike lanes? Everyone agreed. It was mentioned that in Kennewick drivers tend to park in bike lanes if they are 6 feet wide. Since overlaying this area is a long way off, this might be a good one to consider for the grant. John said the challenges would be between 395 and Union, which is four lanes.
- f. **4th Avenue** - This is another good thoroughfare east to west. This would be the best east/west bike route as there are already some bike lanes from Amistad School to Steptoe. We definitely want to enhance the bike culture in the Tri-Cities and their focus is working with traffic to make it safer for everyone. It would be great if we could take this route to the downtown. If you have a main east/west traffic road that motorists can drive, and we want to create a bicycle route, we should pick either 4th or 10th and create a 3 lane road with a bicycle lane. That way, either can pick which one they want to drive or bike. 10th Ave. addresses both issues.

- g. **Gage and CCB.** - The City completed a path from the end of Richland's path. Strong design is to connect it across Gage and through the railroad ROW. People would like to see this continue on. We do have a sewer line on this property, and we recently paid for a 20 ft. sewer easement there. If it's a city easement, it can be made multiple use. This is a good long term one we may want to pursue.
- h. **Spirit of the American Trail** - This is a walk path/trail that starts at 27th by the Waste Management Center and ends at 7th & Vancouver at the Zintel Canyon Park. It is paved from 7th to 15th. The rest is a gravel path. There is graffiti, transients and kids use it to party. If you make it bicycle friendly, that would help with those problems. A good chunk is owned by the KID. The trail is already there, so it wouldn't be difficult to enhance.
- i. **Columbia Park at the golf course.** – A lot of bicycles use the Sacagawea Trail. Through the park there is the off-street path and then the on-street path that used to be travel lanes. There is a missing piece though of the on-street path on the south side of the road. The missing link starts just east of the golf club house, where the bike lane ends and runs to the roundabout. This is a regional connectivity issue as this path encompasses all three cities.
- j. **Kellogg & Metaline,** Work Source and Tri-Tech building – years ago, transit moved their shelter so that the shelters would be directly across from each other at Work Source (also serving Tri-Tech). The intent was to someday install a median crossing and possibly RRFB beacons and so this would make a good project for a grant proposal.
- k. **Duffy's Pond Path** – 600 feet of missing bike path behind Columbia Fitness.
- l. **Cascade Elementary** - Cascade Elementary would be a good comprehensive school project and their need is more for sidewalks. Cary asked if all the schools have a beacon system, answer yes. We would prefer RRFB. A comprehensive sidewalk project would include Highland Drive, Cascade Street, and possibly Jean Street. One question is would we want to do sidewalks without curbs or not. The 20 MPH School Zones are meant to cover the crossings which is the challenging part. Doug said that these streets were county and therefore weren't built with sidewalks. Cascade is a great project because of its general lack of sidewalks.
- m. **General RRFB Projects for Safe Routes to School** - John said that over the years we have managed to get every major school zone with a 20mph zone. This is great, but the RRFB is more effective than just the 20 mph zones alone. What is needed though is a prioritization method for all school projects, because one vocal parent gets unhappy and a lower level project then rises to the top. A prioritization method would help stabilize the project list. One method would be to prioritize RRFB locations that protect crossings on arterial and collector streets where daily traffic counts are in the range of 6000-8000 or more. Canyon View, with a crossing on Olympia has about 8,000 vehicles per day in that section and is a good example. If we were to prioritize RRFB's we should look at locations like these. Question, "do we get good compliance with the 20 mph in school zones?" Trevor White said they usually have a traffic officer at the start of school available, which helps deter speeding. Most schools put crossing guards there, which also has a definite impact. If we get a complaint, the traffic officer will park and make their presence known. John explained that we are just finishing up a project to put up End School Zones

signs at many key locations along with backside beacons which he believes will help School Zone Speed compliance in general. That will help the PD to know when the beacons are on for sure.

Again, Cary suggested that we form a subcommittee and look over the suggestions discussed and bring them back to the table. We need to move forward with these grants. Send out an electronic questionnaire and gather information/costs. Must be a timely though as the grants are due in May. Direct your comments to John.

Chief Hohenberg pointed out that since John came on board with the City, there has been a huge change for the better in our accident and traffic incidents and would like to personally thank him for his hard work and dedication. Council is also aware of this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Olympia Street, 27th to SR397– still trying to get the speed limit up. It is on our list. Some sign changes also. It has to be a council agenda item because it's changing speeds.
2. Washington Street Rail Crossing - Having discussions with the railroad. This is a dead track. Used to go the old Welches. The WUTC gave us permission to post it exempt years ago. The railroad has yet to put up the crosswalk signs. Alisha has been emailing the transit on everything. The railroad has been unresponsive to get the new cross buck signs up. School and transit buses stop there, and it holds up traffic unnecessarily. The city is still working with the railroad and is supposed to get together to try and get the cross buck and exempt signs in place.

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following projects were discussed:

- i. Clearwater Safety Project
- ii. Citywide Safety Project
- iii. Edison Street widening
- iv. SR395/Ridgeline Drive
- v. Steptoe/Hildebrand/Bob Olson Parkway/Clodfelter Road
- vi. Vista Field
- vii. Metaline reconstruction (design only) - Kellogg to Edison
- viii. East Columbia Park Ped/Bike Project
- ix. Duffy's Pond Path & Columbia Drive Streetscape

Questions and/or discussion regarding the projects are as follows:

1. Doug asked about the new Desert Hills School, Desert Hills on Clodfelter, which will be opening up soon, parents want to know how their kids are going to walk to the new school, particularly from the north. Cary said we should sit down and have a coordinated response to the community on this issue.

2. Regarding the Duffy's Pond and Streetscape project, the owner of Columbia Fitness has reached out and asked what the width of ROW and trail alignment would look like. He is interested in dedicating that ground. We sent a crew out to stake it. He has some transients and issues behind them. This might be a good high priority bike/ped project (added to the list above).

INFORMATION ITEMS

Tony Kalmbach informed the committee that Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) is in the process of doing a major comprehensive study right now. There could be some changes to routes and service. The BFT is keeping the cities up to date and doing outreach. They are holding a public meeting coming up in May and would encourage anyone to attend.

The next Traffic Safety Commission meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m. by Ken Hohenberg.

Respectfully submitted,

John Deskins
Secretary