

## TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

### October 23, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Cormier, Walt Willett, Brent Krueger, Capt Bedford, Gene Wade

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sondra Baker, Trina White

STAFF SUPPORT: Debi Meling, Terry Smith, Erin Claunch, Zach Heid

GUESTS: None

#### BUSINESS MEETING:

**Call to order:** Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:19 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

**Minutes:** Motion for approval of the August minutes by Walt Willett, seconded by Gene Wade. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**Open Public Comment:** None

#### STAFF REPORTS:

**Public Works Engineering:** Terry Smith reported that construction is winding down for the season.

#### BOARD REPORTS:

**Planning Board.** Terry reported on behalf of Lora Mattox. Planning Board has been pretty quiet. The City Council approved the contract with Fehr and Peers for the Hospitality Corridor Study. The EBURD Exposition Gateway plan is proceeding and the first public meeting with the property owners was held recently to get their input. Todd mentioned that there has also been discussion about a transit loop connecting the downtown area to the college.

#### COUNCIL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION:

Debi reported that following a recent pedestrian accident on North 27<sup>th</sup>, Council Member Bird inquired about whether the traffic signals can be timed so that pedestrians and vehicles move separately.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

**Billings Bypass.** Todd mentioned that the public comment period has ended for the Billings Bypass project. Capt. Bedford asked if the project will move forward as planned given the concerns raised by some residents in the Heights. Todd said the project still needs to complete the environmental study and that final FHWA approval is probably 8 months to a year away. The project will be completed in phases with the first phase being a 2 lane road from Johnson Lane to Mary Street. The 4-lane road

would come later. Improvements are required along both the Mary Street and the Five Mile Road corridors to handle the traffic the bypass will bring. Improvements will also be needed at the Roundup turn-off (Main-US 87-Highway 312) and the Mary Street/ Bench Boulevard intersections.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Parking Lot Design Standards:** Erin Claunch and Terry Smith distributed a drawing with new parking lot layout standards. This is the first change in many years. The layouts are based on recommendations in the latest edition of *The Dimensions of Parking* published by the Urban Land Institute. Following recommendations in that reference, separate dimensions for “compact” and “standard” parking spaces were not adopted. A common layout that serves both sizes of vehicles is used. The dimensions shown on the drawing are minimums. Larger size spaces or aisles can be used if desired. Gene asked which dimensions were changed. Terry noted that in most cases the “interlock” dimension (space+aisle+space) was reduced slightly. The standards will apply to all new parking lots. Walt mentioned that he prefers the use of double lines between stalls because it reduces crowding because people are far less likely to park too close to the adjacent stall.

**HAWK Signal at 4<sup>th</sup> Ave N & N 20<sup>th</sup> St:** Erin gave a presentation on the **High-intensity Activated Crosswalk** signal (HAWK signal) proposed for 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North at North 20<sup>th</sup> Street. The signal is a result of the traffic study completed for the new Federal office building being built on the north side of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Development standards for the new EBURD district do not require any off-street parking be provided. Although the site will provide 167 parking spaces, it is estimated that up to an additional 150 cars per day from the office building will park south of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, resulting in a significant number of pedestrians crossing 4<sup>th</sup>. The traffic study determined that warrants for a conventional traffic signal were not met at the intersection, but that pedestrian activity would be high enough to meet warrants for a HAWK signal. Erin explained how a HAWK signal works. It is less disruptive to vehicular traffic because vehicles can proceed when it is safe to do so without having to wait for a pedestrian phase to fully time out. Vehicular traffic on N. 20<sup>th</sup> will not be controlled by the HAWK signal and will continue to be controlled by a stop sign. Only the pedestrian crossing on the west side of the intersection will be controlled by the HAWK signal.

The cost of a HAWK signal is approximately half of the price of a normal traffic signal. The HAWK signal is being paid for by the developer. The project will include bulbouts (curb extensions) on 4<sup>th</sup> to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance and improve driver’s visibility of pedestrians waiting to cross. The HAWK signal is expected to be operational when the new federal office building opens in the spring of 2013.

**Nov-Dec meeting date:** The Traffic Control Board meetings for November and December will be combined and held on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:18 pm.