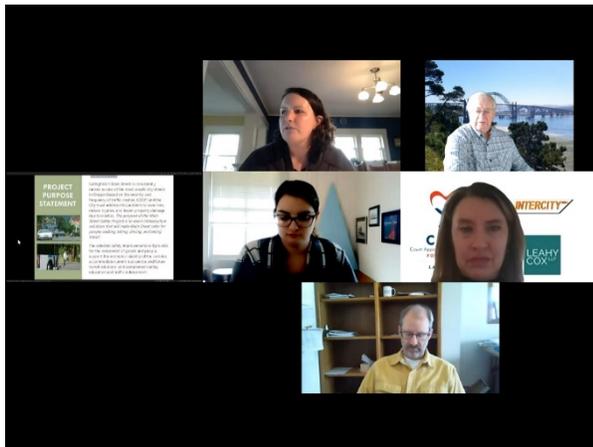


The Main Street Safety Project has been out of the public eye for some time as staff worked on options for solutions and dealt with the difficulty of reaching the public in the midst of a pandemic. Now, however, it is about to be squarely focused in the public eye again. Molly Markarian, Senior planner for the City of Springfield, and Brian Barnett, the City's Traffic Engineer, briefed Springfield City Club on where the project stands and what steps are next, at the January 7 program. Public input will be solicited at a series of three online forums on February 9, 10, and 11. These online forums will give citizens their first chance to see the draft solutions that City staff have worked out with the help of a strategic advisory team of residents, business owners and property owners. Those interested should register for one of the forums by February 5, 2021. Information on registration is found at the project website [Our Main Street Springfield](#).



Staff and the Strategic Advisory Committee have developed a series of short term and long-term recommendations that attempt to balance the needs of safety, traffic mobility and business access. The short-term solutions involve installation of raised center medians throughout most of the corridor which runs from 20th Street to 72nd Street, with additional improvements in various segments of the route, all within the framework of the existing right of way. Plans would be in place to provide for as many breaks in the medians as possible to allow for left turns and U-turns to reduce out of direction travel.

The long-term solutions expand on that by implementing a variety of intersection controls, and additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities. There staff have developed two alternative forms of street cross-section to be used in various places along the corridor. Some of the alternatives will involve the acquisition of additional right of way. Among other things, the proposals would implement roundabouts at some major intersections along the route to further reduce out of direction travel.

The project is a joint effort between the City and the Oregon department of Transportation, since Main Street is officially a state highway under the control of ODOT. The timeline of the project anticipates construction over a five-to-20-year period, assuming funding can be identified.

The proposal to install raised medians generated the most questions at the program. Mr. Barnett reported that the studies they have done indicate that raised medians reduce crashes by half and increase delay in trips by no more than 30 seconds. He said that the greatest portion of the crashes on the existing system were rear end and turning movement crashes, attributable to failing to yield and following too closely. Medians are particularly effective in those situations, he said. He did note that the proposals would have as many breaks for left and U-turns as can be accommodated safely to balance the safety concerns with the need to make businesses easily reachable. The challenge in placing medians is that currently businesses that have deliveries by large truck now use the center lane for truck parking for unloading. That would not be possible with medians and truckers would need to park on side streets or risk blocking travel lanes to unload. Some companies might choose to provide smaller trucks to make deliveries along Main street. He acknowledged that businesses had raised concerns about the medians

and noted that the decision on project implementation would be made by the City Council and Ms. Markarian added that there would always consider a no-build option.

Several questions were raised about reducing the speed limit on Main street. Mr. Barnett said that ODOT had reduced the speed limit to 35 west of Bob Straub Parkway but added that reducing the speed limit is not always the most effective way to control speed. Both he and Ms. Markarian pointed to changes in the traffic movement environment and the built environment adjoining the street as more effective tools. Roundabouts do have the effect of reducing speed, as does the character of the land adjacent – more trees, improved lighting, more visual objects all have the effect of reducing speed.



Mr. Barnett was asked about the need for additional right of way taken from private property if the City installs roundabouts. Ms. Markarian displayed a conceptual drawing showing alternative intersection forms including a roundabout and noted that in these drawings the roundabout did not require much additional space. Mr. Barnette pointed to the roundabout at Hayden Bridge and Pioneer Parkway which, he said occupied a little more land at the pint of the intersection, but much less land some distance away than would a signalized intersection designed to handle the same volume of traffic.