



Meeting: Ashland Downtown Parking and Multi-Modal Circulation PAC Meeting

Date: May 4, 2016

Time: 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Location: Council Chambers, 1175 East Main Street

- I. Public Comment (Public) (10 minutes)**
Note: Written comments may be submitted

- II. Minutes approval – April (10 minutes)**

- III. Continued discussion about conditions and concerns of the proposed 3 lane to 2 lane conversion (100 minutes)**

ASHLAND DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT & CIRCULATION AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

These minutes are pending approval by this Committee

April 6, 2016

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1175 East Main St.

Regular members present: Chair Dave Young, Pam Hammond (arrived at 3:37), Marie Donovan, Michael Dawkins, John Williams (arrived at 3:38), Joe Graf, John Fields, and Joe Collonge

Regular members absent: Lisa Beam, Emile Amarotico, Cynthia Rider, and Lynn Thompson

Ex officio (non-voting) members present: Katharine Cato (left at 5:07), Michael Faught, Sandra Slattery, and Pam Marsh (arrived at 4:48)

Ex officio (non-voting) members absent: Lee Tuneberg, Bill Molnar, Mike Gardiner, and Rich Rosenthal

City of Ashland Staff members present: Tami De Mille-Campos

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Young shared this committee has been meeting for over two years. Most of those two years were spent working on a draft parking plan and for the last two months the committee has been working on the multi-modal piece of the plan. He referred to a newspaper article published over the weekend and shared nothing has been decided as of this point. This meeting is a continuation of the March meeting in which the multi-modal piece was discussed.

Faught explained this committee will not be voting on the plan during this meeting. There is still a public process piece to this that will occur before the committee is expected to vote on the plan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of March 2, 2016

Minutes are approved as presented.

PUBLIC FORUM

Julia Sommer, resides at 1158 Village Square Drive

She said after reading about this in the newspaper she was so excited to read that a bike lane through downtown may be a reality. She expressed her support of the proposed bike lane and shared that on her way to the meeting she was walking along the sidewalk on Main Street and she had to get out of the way of three young boys who were riding their bikes on the sidewalk because there is no bike lane for them.

She also shared that she has lived here for twelve years and has never had a problem parking downtown perhaps because she doesn't expect to find a parking spot directly in front of her destination. She doesn't understand the idea there is a problem with parking downtown. Although the safety of drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and delivery trucks does. She thinks it is great that the plan is going to incorporate a plan for the delivery trucks to not block traffic because that poses safety concerns.

Judi Honore, owns Shakespeare Books and Antiques located at 163 East Main Street

Judi read a series of questions to the committee (see handout). She also noted she had interviewed about 20 people before coming to the meeting. The responses she got regarding how people would feel if there was only 1 lane of traffic were: "frustrating, horrible, painful, terrible, bad idea, as bad as the homeless situation, come here to get out of traffic, and parking problems".

Robert Bestor, resides at 2689 Takelma Way and owns Travel Essentials located at 252 East Main Street

He rides a bike about 7 months out of the year from the south end of town to the shop. He is a bike advocate and an advocate of having bike lanes through downtown as well. He is also an advocate of traffic calming along Main Street. However, his fear is that losing 21 parking spaces will have a negative effect on his business and other downtown

businesses. He hopes the committee can figure out a way to save those parking spaces.

Karen Chapman, resides at 112 Almond Street and owns Bloomsbury books located at 290 East Main Street. She informed the committee that she was told businesses in the downtown were notified about this when it was first discussed and the businesses seemed to like the idea. She spent the day interviewing everyone she could on Main Street and everyone said it was a terrible idea! She added that we need to deal with a parking crisis not eliminate 21 parking spaces. If 21 parking spaces were lost it would be devastating to business and some may not be able to keep their doors open much longer if that were to happen. She said this is a town made up of elderly people and in a perfect world everyone would love to bicycle and be healthy enough to do that up and down our streets and through town but that likely isn't going to happen. Ashland isn't made up that way. She also has questions about where the money is going to come from, what about congestion, and what about the impact it will have on the businesses while the construction is taking place. She feels this is a premature conversation and she doesn't think you can talk about this until the parking crisis is solved.

George Kramer, resides at 386 N Laurel

In reading through the draft plan he noticed the parking bays for truck loading is laid out to extend to 4:00 pm. He thinks this should be reconsidered because he feels they are going to be attractive places to illegally park and unless the City is thinking about ticketing, he thinks the trucks are going to use those but they are going to sit vacant most of the time in an exacerbated parking situation. It is going to cause issues for police, business owners and for the shoppers too. He also added that it seems like the City continues to tinker endlessly with the community. Sometimes that works out well and sometimes it has unintended consequences. He added most know that he is not a huge fan of the "road diet". He thinks it is a nice idea in the middle of nothing. He understands this is an attempt to extend the concept of a "road diet" through downtown but as "Jane Jacobs would tell you, these are incredibly complicated places and messing with any one part of it has all sorts of unintended consequences". He encourages the committee to consider the possibility of just leaving it alone.

Julie Teitelbaum, resides at 237 Almond Street

She has lived here since 1977. She owns the retail store called 250 Main, as well as property on part of that block, which includes the Columbia Hotel, as well as 7 retail spaces downtown. She has been told by everyone that this has been going on for 3 years and she didn't know anything about it until yesterday when she saw the newspaper article. She came here in 1977 when the downtown was primarily boarded up and there was no real downtown, with no successful businesses. Downtown Ashland has now become a viable part of the tourist industry, which keeps the town alive. She thinks taking any parking spaces away from the businesses would sabotage this town. The demographics for this town and OSF patrons are predominantly older and many of them are not bicyclists. Although she is a proponent of being a bike rider and at 75 she rides a bike, she knows that as a business person when someone comes to her store and they say they wanted to come yesterday but they couldn't find a parking place, for many people that means they are going to turn to online retailers who offer quick shipping. If we make it impossible or difficult for them to park, we are going to lose a lot of the downtown and it is going to be boarded back up again. OSF keeps the downtown stores/restaurants going and the downtown stores/restaurants keep OSF going. She feels it is ill-advised to change the downtown and she thinks it would be a tragedy for this town. Submitted written comment for the record.

Paul Neiermeyer, resides at 1497 Windsor Street

He is a native Oregonian and moved to Ashland in 2001. He feels trying to remove 21 parking spaces is going to create more problems than it is going to solve. He had read in the newspaper about the parking fine increase and he isn't sure if that is in response to try to increase turnover but he questions why the increase. He stated he hasn't had problems parking downtown but then again he doesn't always park directly in front of where he needs to go.

Alice McGee, owns a kids clothing store at 264 East Main Street

She has owned the store for about 25 years. She said there wasn't too much for her to add except she lives in Jacksonville and she drives through Phoenix every morning to get to work. Since the "road diet" was put in Phoenix it is very slow moving and sometimes there are even automobiles driving in the bike lane and she has yet to see one single bicycle during the morning or night. She has noticed that nobody tends to ride on the right side of the street because they don't know they can cross the bicycle lane to do so. She wonders if 3 lanes can't handle the traffic how

can 2 lanes? She also wonders how long the construction would take and how many of those businesses won't be able to survive.

Jenna Stanke Marmon, Jackson County Parks department, Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Manager

Jenna submitted a letter to the committee members. As she mentioned in the letter, this isn't an official position by Jackson County, she just wanted to offer some resources and food for thought as the decision is made. She is the current chair of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and she has been watching communities throughout the state work towards improving their pedestrian atmosphere (nontraditional players like Tigard, Redmond, Klamath Falls). Nationally there are communities like Oklahoma City who is decoupling their couplets and really working on their pedestrian environment. Indianapolis built the cultural trail which is a 50 million dollar project which has reinvigorated their downtown. She encouraged the committee as they are deliberating on these controversial aspects of the plan to think about what we want to leave the future generation. Do we want to leave them great places to drive or do we want to leave them great places to be? She thinks Jane Jacobs would say the later, that we want to have great places to be. She offered up any resources she can to help the committee make these decisions.

Leigh Nanmann, resides at 320 1/2 Bridge Street

He shared he graduated from SOU with a degree in environmental science. He is a member of the Jackson County Bike Committee. He was also involved in a collision resulting from traffic congestion. He rides through town frequently and has had to deal with the dangers of maneuvering around vehicles that are parked and unloading. This is a real safety hazard for bicyclists and drivers as well. He is here to encourage the committee to move forward with this proposal because from what he has studied by promoting bicycle friendly places and encouraging mobility through town it helps to create a greater foundation for the citizenry of Ashland as a whole. He also pointed out personally he gets a little grumpy when he gets stuck in traffic but he doesn't see the parking crisis stopping no matter what we do. Ashland is a growing community and is going to continue to grow. What we really need to do is encourage pedestrians and bicyclists and creating an atmosphere where people can get around easily. He also encourages the committee to look at moving pedestrian traffic across the streets in a quicker fashion and think about other things that can be done such as maybe a trolley or a tram system that will help create a community atmosphere.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faught encouraged everyone who came, to stick around and listen to the entire meeting. He pointed out that one of the most important things that he would like to share that he has heard from this committee through the entire process is they would not be on board with a plan that would eliminate 21 (it is actually 18) parking spaces. The plan would have to include a way to come up with a way to replace those parking spots before this committee would move forward. He wanted the people in the audience to know that the committee has seen that as an issue all along and we have some ideas on how to do that. He offered to come to smaller business groups to talk in more detail about the entire plan which includes the 3 lane to 2 lane but it also includes the parking side of things and how we can improve parking long-term.

Dawkins shared that he had spent the last few months studying the downtown '62 plan (included in meeting packet). He found it interesting in that the issues that they were dealing with then mirror the issues of today. The 1967 newspaper article explains the outcry regarding everything that was ramrodded through. He shared that many influential people, including his father worked on that plan, and there are many elements of that plan that he thinks are amazing. All of that aside, the reason he sent these documents in is because most of that plan never happened because people were afraid about the same comments that were made today. For 2 1/2 years this committee, made up of diverse opinions, has been trying to find some sort of consensus.

Slattery shared she feels the newspaper article was very poorly done and when she read it she was very concerned because she didn't think there was factual comments that were in there. She doesn't know why that happened or why the article appeared the way it did because it made it sound as if this plan had been approved by this committee. And those committee members that have sat in on these meetings and had some really important points brought out, this article doesn't mention. She shared that the committee has talked about many of the points that were brought up during public forum (cost, public input process, disruption to businesses etc.). She is very disappointed in the article and she feels it was a huge injustice to the real important considerations and conversations this committee has had and

the article gave an unrealistic impression to the downtown businesses. She added there has been some pretty spirited conversations in the past 2 1/2 years with making sure the voices of the downtown businesses are heard.

Chair Young felt moved to respond because his name was in the newspaper article. He sees that the article points out that it is a proposal, he isn't sure where it gives the impression that it is a done deal. He was asked by the reporter "what if things don't work", to which he referred to the road diet and that there were things that got tweaked. When it references him as saying "it would be implemented on a temporary basis" he said he didn't say that and it is not in quotes. The lesson he took away is you can never be too careful with the media, they try to stir up passion and controversy. He read the article many times and he never saw the article present it as a done deal and he did not do that. He got called by KOBI to do an article today and he turned it to Faught.

Faught said as we move forward in the public process many of the committee members might be approached by the media to get opinions and he thinks staff should be the ones working with the media. In terms of messaging it, it may be much easier for staff to do that. He would like to make that recommendation to this committee. He spoke to the City Attorney today about it and the committee's assignment from the Mayor was to work through this process, not to do the media side of it, although there is no hard rule that says that you can't. There may be subject matters that come up where he does want someone else to provide input but he would like the committee to run these through him to make sure we get the right message out to the public.

Slattery said she wished that Faught had been involved in the article.

Donnovan feels the other damage that was done by this article is that this committee has been working for 2 1/2 years on trying to solve the parking problem in the downtown and this is now dovetailing into the this committee for it to be a full package. There are so many questions about costs and where that money will come from, how to not just find those 18 parking spaces but how to find additional parking etc. She wants to be sure nobody loses track of those important questions.

REVIEW FINAL DRAFT

Kim Parducci, Southern Oregon Transportation Engineering

Parducci said she is back this month to talk some more about some of the multi-modal projects that the committee has been discussing. After listening to the public testimony, she wanted to say that she feels it is wonderful to have people voice their concerns because there hasn't been a lot of that up to this point and it's good to hear and to know what those concerns are. A lot of the concerns are the same concerns that the committee has had and has kept in mind when trying to develop this plan and she feels good about that. The big picture is these projects that are being proposed create the multi-modal aspect of this plan and that may have come in at the last moment but it's a very important part of the plan. She mentioned as Rick Williams pointed out previously, we are at the point now where it is hard to find parking and its likely going to get worse. So you have a couple of simple options; create more parking with parking garages, shared parking, or you can beef up the multi-modal aspects and that is exactly what this part of the plan does. It creates the connections that do not currently exist for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus riders. By doing that, you open up spaces in the downtown for the customers who drive their cars. This part of the plan balances that; you make the spaces that you do have in inventory stretch further and she feels that is a really important part that is sometimes forgotten when looking at the details of the plan. This plan is really simple in that the multi-modal aspect was taken from the TSP pieces that relate to the downtown area and the bicycle projects, sidewalk projects, transit routes, and the pedestrian projects are in a big effort to connect people to the downtown. People who are capable of using these modes of transportation may choose another mode besides driving and that is the importance of this multi-modal aspect. So the TSP projects are a part of the proposal, as well as additional projects that have come from feedback received since this committee formed. She stressed the 3 lane to 2 lane conversion is not an effort to stretch the road diet into the downtown area. They are trying to find a way to connect all of the users to the downtown and preserve the parking.

Parducci stepped through the 3 lane to 2 lane presentation from the March meeting. She said by creating the narrow section as you come into the downtown, you are channelizing the traffic and flow. The proposal includes removing the signal at Helman and necking it down to 1 lane so that way you are already transitioned and you don't have the back and forth fighting for transitioning. The proposal is also to neck it down into 1 lane in the southbound direction

coming into the plaza so that it makes it easier on traffic at Helman to make that left turn movement into the downtown (without the signal). It also makes it easier when you are coming around the loop road by Church Street because now the majority of traffic is going to be in 1 lane and they can pull into the inside lane without having to fight that traffic. It should allow the traffic to flow much better and the pedestrians who aren't having to cross a signal, would only have to cross 12 feet to get into the island and then cross another 12 feet to get across to the sidewalk on the other side. She said she knows everyone is worried about congestion but when you have signalized intersections you increase congestion. With the signal the congestion typically backs up to Bush Street but by removing the signal you allow the cars to free flow.

There was discussion regarding the center refuge that would be created near Bards Inn. Slattery mentioned this would allow someone who was coming from the north to safely turn left into the Bards Inn parking lot which she recently had mentioned to Faught.

Parducci described how the plan would split the traffic northbound on Lithia, the left lane would be dedicated for the loop road and the right lane would be dedicated for through traffic onto Main Street. Dawkins shared that the trucks park and unload right in front of Bards in near Helman. He thinks someone should discuss this with Bards Inn.

Parducci went on to explain there has been concerns regarding the safety on Water Street. She said by closing the beaver slide to vehicular traffic a good portion of traffic is eliminated on Water Street which is then having to make that turn at the Plaza. She explained in the section between the loop road and Water Street there are 3 parking spaces being eliminated in front of Patricia Sprague and Brothers Restaurant. In the section between Water Street and Oak Street there are no parking spaces being eliminated but they are incorporating a bus stop, a bike lane that connects all the way into the Plaza which currently doesn't exist, and bulb outs so that pedestrians don't have to cross as far of a distance at the intersections and disrupt traffic for as long. Oak/Main is a failing intersection, by having it signalized it creates better coordination for the vehicle all the way through town and it protects the movement for the pedestrians to cross when it is their turn. On the other side of Oak Street, at Lithia, there is also a signal being recommended, which was a TSP project. Collonge asked about putting a signal at First Street. Faught said in a recent discussion with ODOT, they were actually recommending that as well (to assist with pedestrians crossing) and it is something they will continue to look at.

Parducci explained that by creating the loading zones it actually provides 2 lanes for through traffic which currently there are times when you have a truck loading on both sides creating only 1 lane to through traffic. The perception might be that we are trying to reduce the lanes but the plan really calls for better utilization of the 2 lanes than what we are currently doing with the 3 lanes. Faught said he has spoken to Diamond Parking and the Ashland Police regarding enforcement of the loading zones because that is a critical piece. Several people were curious to know what the fine would be for impeding traffic. Faught said he would check with Officer MacLennan on that.

Parducci said there were some operational questions at the last meeting so she went back and ran the model and the model showed that southbound on Main Street from Helman to 3rd Street, at 16 mph (which is the average speed in the model) in the existing year it takes 82.5 seconds. Going down to 2 lanes it takes 89 seconds, so under a 7 second increase in the model. She pointed out that the model doesn't factor in trucks being parked in the road so the model is assuming there isn't that problem. In the opposite direction (northbound) it was 78 seconds in the current year and 88.5 seconds in the future year.

Chair Young asked how Parducci feels about the validity of the modeling and is it accurate. Parducci said she feels it is valid and accurate. You calibrate the modeling, set them up using input factors, watch the modeling run and then you go out into the field and you watch how it is operating in the real world. Then you make further adjustments to the modeling if necessary. She said if you can get your base model to look like your real world situation then when you make changes to that base model it should reflect what is going to happen when those changes are implemented. The hard part is getting your base model to look how it really is.

Donnovan said one thing the modeling can't do is predict how this will impact the businesses during the period of time in which construction is taking place and what congestion is going to look like during that time. That unknown is the most daunting for her. She said change is inevitable and it's a great thing but she has seen communities that

have done major projects based on the assumption that it is going to change behavior in people and that doesn't always work. Faught said he has Jaime Jordan from OBEC working on the cost and construction aspect of this plan. She is in attendance to listen to the feedback and look at the proposals. From a construction perspective the plan is to proceed with minimal impact to the downtown area (night construction, begin with sidewalks first, one lane at a time etc).

Hammond asked about the parking spot that is near the Wells Fargo driveway. She said it appears in the map that it is no longer there and she wanted to know if that loss was accounted for in the 18 parking spaces. Faught said he would look into that because it is hard to tell from the presentation.

Graf said in the design there has been a lot of talk about streetscape and expanding the sidewalks and he was wondering if that is incorporated into these diagrams? Parducci wasn't sure but Faught said Jaime has looked at that and he could have her bring drawings to a future meeting. He also asked about the X's that are in between every two parking spaces, he was wondering if eliminating those would gain additional parking spaces. Faught said he had that conversation early on with the University of Oregon group and he will go back and pull that information but he doesn't recall it netting any increase. Graf asked how much of this is the current committee being asked to approve and how much of it is being left for the future committee. Faught said it is a little bit different than the parking strategies and what he heard at the last meeting was there are some clear things this current committee needs to see on this 3 lane to 2 lane proposal before they are going to let this go. Dawkins feels the pricing and time stays which have yet to be decided also play a factor. Graf is confused as to what the group is supposed to worry about and what is going to be passed off to the next committee. Dawkins said he agrees but there has to be something tangible that goes to City Council without drilling down into every detail. Faught said he would like to get to a point where everyone is comfortable with the plan. He informed the committee that he has hired an architect to come up with some conceptual drawings to show what the downtown might look like with these multi-modal projects.

Fields said when these projects are undertaken we need to make sure we take into consideration improvements to utilities and take a good look at what utilities are currently existing.

Parducci said she would like to know from the committee what they would like to see in order to be comfortable with proceeding with this. Hammond said costs are still a big question for her and how are those costs going to be paid for. Faught said the cost is around 6 million dollars. Hammond and Slattery asked if that includes upgrading to the new light standards and adding flowers etc. Dawkins said that is a part of the scope of the downtown beatification committee. Jaime Jordan said that figure of 6 million included upgrading the aged utilities, putting in new trees up to the new tree standards, putting in 2 new signals etc.

Slattery mentioned needing to discuss the disruption that this will cause for the downtown and what does that really mean to the businesses. She also asked if the signal is added at First Street how will that "increased congestion" address the climate action plan. Chair Young feels that by making the multi-modal connectivity happen you are going to do a lot for the climate action plan by encouraging and making it safer for people to travel as pedestrians and bicyclists. He also added that future trends are showing that younger people are driving less and want to be more active. Donovan said she has an issue with the assumption that if you build it people are going to use it. She doesn't think you are going to see that many people changing their behavior. Slattery thought maybe her question was misunderstood. She said several years ago there was a pedestrian death at the intersection of Main and First Street so she isn't opposed to having a signal at that intersection. She was curious because she knows we are committed to a climate action plan. She wonders if it is actually a better solution to have that intersection signalized since every block prior to that is going to have one. Parducci said ODOT thinks so and we are going to model it. Dawkins said an example is on Central Avenue in Medford near Rogue Community College (RCC). The traffic seems to move through there and they certainly have a huge amount of pedestrian traffic with the library and RCC.

Dawkins said one other thing that Fields made him think about is how tight the bridge over Water Street is. Whenever he has ridden his bike there, it is very tight. He isn't sure that is going to feel comfortable for the average bike rider. Faught said they looked at standard widths all the way through but they will take a look again. He also pointed out that during a recent conversation with Rick Williams he pointed out that all of our bike racks in town are full, even without having many bicycle facilities and for him that is a strong indication the desire is there.

Graf pointed out he thinks the plan itself needs to change. It looks like the multi-modal portion of the plan is an add on and was thrown in at the last minute. There is nothing that talks about the vision for redesigning Main Street except the maps. It also doesn't include the requirements to this committee being able to support the plan (making the 18 spaces whole, not disrupting the businesses etc.). The charge to the Parking Advisory Committee and the charge to the Parking Manager have nothing to do with the construction of multi-modal projects so it is unclear where all of this goes. Faught said this is a draft plan and they tried to pull what they could together in time for this meeting. Also, he made it very clear to the Council at this week's study session that the multi-modal piece will go through the Transportation Commission. Graf thinks it should all be spelled out within the plan before they are asked to support it.

Slattery said she appreciated Graf's comments. She feels like the plan needs an overarching statement for their efforts of what they are doing and what the intention is. She had people in her office for 2 hours yesterday and she feels it is critical to have a statement of what the mission is and that we want public input. She encouraged others to send their suggestions to Faught and he said he would appreciate the feedback. He added we will continue to tweak the document and make it flow better. He doesn't think we can get it done in time to get it out to the public before summertime so rather than try to do it during the summer when people are gone, at this stage maybe the committee might go a few months without meeting.

Faught said the City Administrator wanted him to point out the section that talks about the Downtown Parking Coordinator position because it needs to include "the structure of the parking management program is subject to the City Administrator's discretion". He needs to decide where that plan goes. He is saying he is ok with the Parking Coordinator position but if this plan is approved he will decide where that position goes.

Chair Young wanted to share he has caught an undercurrent that people feel he pushed the narrative that ended up in the newspaper and if that is true he wants to dispel that. He said he got called by the reporter and assumed Faught had told them to talk to him as the Chair. Donovan said the reporter had called her too but she didn't return her phone call. She had also received a phone call from another reporter and she said she wasn't qualified to answer those questions and she gave him the name of Faught. Young said he was very careful about how he framed his statements. Faught said it sounds like we have that figured out for the future.

NEXT STEPS

The next meeting will be held on May 4, 2016 at 3:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tami De Mille-Campos, Administrative Supervisor

1. ^{Do}~~Can~~ we all agree that the inability to find a parking space has a direct affect on businesses?

2. Would it be important for a city such as Ashland to attempt to match parking supply with demand?

3. We live in a community of elderly people. Many have disabilities that do not allow them to walk long distances?

4. From my observations the majority of people who attend the plays are older (with the exception of those who come from schools in buses). Do we really want those elderly people to get frustrated and not come to the plays or in our businesses anymore?

SUBMITTED AT MEETING

SPEAKER #2

5. I have experienced on many occasions what it is like to have one lane of traffic when road work is being done and people get frustrated trying to deal with one lane, cut in in front of you, honk, and "feel the pain". Do we want that for our tourists?

6. Has anyone done a study of how long trucks come into our community and stay to unload and how long those individual spaces for truck unloaded would sat vacant from 8:30AM - 5:00PM? I imagine they would be vacant a lot which would even frustrate those who were looking for a parking space even more than if we didn't have those?

7. If we are going to put the customer first then it is necessary to start before they reach the front doors of our stores and that is by finding a parking place?

8. One of the reasons more people are buying online is because of convenience and one of the main reasons is travelling to the store and then finding parking. Why would we want to inconvenience them even more? — over

9. Frustrating, horrible, painful, terrible, bad idea, as bad as the homeless situation, come here to get out of traffic + parking problems—

Please add these
comments to
your minutes

April 6, 2016

Letter to the Editor;

I feel it is important to add my comments to the committee who is looking at the downtown of Ashland traffic patterns.

It is beyond my comprehension how taking 21 parking places away from the downtown area that is already struggling with parking during the year would help anyone who lives or shops in this town. As a retail merchant in this town and real estate owner I find it incredible that you would even consider taking a lane out of the town for driving, parking or deliveries when the town already struggles to stay alive and viable.

I am a bike rider and enjoy the bike path and feel there is plenty of room to safely bike downtown.

If I am not shopping on my bike I prefer to bike on the bike path and if shopping on my bike find it is safe and easy to ride through the downtown area. However I am more concerned with the general demographic of this town which has a majority of older citizens in this area. I also know that the majority of travelers who come into town to enjoy our shops, theatre and restaurants are also older. We need to keep it easy for them to park and shop in this town. Even parking 3 blocks away can change a person from an in store shopper to an online shopper.

Changing patterns of parking and traffic would destroy this town and we would soon look like so many downtown areas including Medford which cannot keep its downtown from struggling and empty. Being in retail business is already very difficult in a small town and if you cannot easily park and walk into a shop you will use your phone or computer and shop on line.

I strongly urge everyone who is interested in the viability of our charming downtown area to write, go to meeting about this huge possible change for Ashland. When I first moved here in 1977 lots of store fronts were boarded up and there was not a strong downtown, few shops, few good restaurants. If we are not very careful NOW we could again go that way.

JULI Teitelbaum



**SUBMITTED AT MEETING
SPEAKER #6**



JACKSON COUNTY

Parks

Roads & Parks

Jenna Stanke Marmon
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April 6, 2016

Ashland Downtown Parking & Multi-Modal Circulation Committee

RE: Proposed multi-modal improvements

Dear Chair Young and Members of the Committee:

I have reviewed the Multimodal Downtown Projects portion of the Ashland Strategic Parking Management Plan and would like to offer information that could be helpful as you review the proposal. I would first like to clarify that Jackson County is not taking an official position on this topic and my comments do not in any way reflect otherwise.

I have been involved in application processes for several different transportation funding programs as an applicant and also as a reviewer as part of my experience serving on the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. It may be helpful for the Committee to think about these considerations/criteria themes that are included in programs such as the Connect Oregon and STIP Enhance in relationship to the downtown proposal:

- Connectivity
- Safety and Public Health
- Accessibility and Mobility
- Economic Benefits
- System Efficiency and Utilization
- Environmental Stewardship

I would specifically like to elaborate on a few of these topics: economic benefits, safety and connectivity.

Economic Benefits: A quick Google search on “economic impacts of bike lanes” will lead you to pages and pages of articles, case studies and research on the economic benefits of better infrastructure for people to walk and bike. Sure, many of these are from Portland, New York City, San Francisco, etc. but there are examples from smaller neighborhoods within those cities, as well as studies in places that aren’t typically considered “bikey” like Fort Worth, Memphis and Iowa.

Good infrastructure for people to walk, bike and take transit helps communities attract the talented workforce that business owners need to be successful and helps them save money on healthcare—their employees can build activities into their daily routine, which is critical for long term, sustainable health.

SUBMITTED AT MEETING

SPEAKER #9

Tourism provides another economic opportunity—Jackson County, in partnership with the Ashland VCB, Ashland Parks, Siskiyou Velo, and others, will be holding an inaugural Up and Down Bike Ride which will highlight the recently designated Cascade Siskiyou Scenic Bikeway. Our goals are to tap into and increase the \$400 million annual economic impact from bicycle tourism in Oregon.

Whether the economic benefits come from people who arrive on foot or by bike visiting local businesses more often and spending more money over time, or from attracting visitors who want to bike around the community or wander on wide, comfortable sidewalks, building better infrastructure results in better business.

Connectivity: Jackson County successfully proposed a Region Active Transportation Plan with support and funding from the Rogue Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. This plan will focus on connecting regional destinations with low stress, high comfort facilities for people to bike and walk, with an emphasis on connections to transit. Regional destinations will include city centers, employment, health care, shopping and other critical community resources. Connecting people to and through downtowns will be a goal, and projects like this proposal will likely be identified as important to our Region.

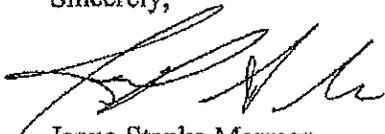
Safety & Health: Over 30,000 people die on our roadways every year in this country. The trends are not good, Oregon saw a 27% increase in fatalities 2015, and pedestrian deaths surged nationally by an estimated 10%.

Reducing vehicle speeds and pedestrian crossing distance and improving pedestrian visibility by adding bulb outs can save lives and is a proven safety countermeasure, and adding bike lanes where there are currently none is also a proven safety countermeasure per the Federal Highway Administration.

In addition, there are many people who are reluctant or hesitant to walk or bike because they don't feel safe, and making these kinds of improvements will capture a wider number of community members who will be willing to navigate around traffic if there is a designated space.

I hope you will consider these factors as you make this very important decision for Ashland and for our region as a whole. Please do not hesitate to contact me for reference material or for more information, I am happy to be a resource.

Sincerely,



Jenna Stanke Marmon
Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Manager

SUBMITTED AT MEETING



264 EAST MAIN STREET
ASHLAND, OR 97520
www.prizeshoppe.com
541-282-4970

April 6, 2016

ATTN: Mayor John Stromberg
City of Ashland Public Works
Downtown Parking Mgmt. and Circulation Ad Hoc Transportation Committee
Committee Chairman David Young

My name is Jennifer Streit and I am a downtown small business merchant. My shop PRIZE at 264 East Main between First and Second Avenues has been open for 11 years. I was born and raised in this beautiful town and am proud to now own a downtown retail business here.

So much of what is special about Ashland is the unique and varied shops downtown.

I strongly feel this current proposal to eliminate parking in favor of a bike path and a loading zone would definitely affect downtown merchants, especially in the zone that would lose parking spots. I already hear from many of my local customers and repeat tourists that they couldn't find nearby parking. And, this is not just in the busy summer season. I can't imagine the fallout of losing 21 parking spots as well as the time and length of construction to implement this proposal.

There is already an existing bike path that covers that section of town that could be further promoted to divert bicycles from the downtown area.

I hope you will hear the voices of the merchants that will be most effected by this proposal.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Streit 541-282-4970

SUBMITTED AT MEETING

Subject: Proposed Downtown Bike Lane 'Diet'
From: Cripple Creek <cripplecreekmusic@gmail.com>
Date: 4/6/2016 1:03 PM
To: <mike.fought@ashland.or.us>

Mike,

This idea, though well intentioned, would be a disaster for downtown businesses. There are not enough parking spaces as it is. Taking away 21 more would make it almost impossible to shop downtown.

The biggest change in Ashland the past 30 years is not population (which reached about 20,000 in 1980, and has more or less stayed around that figure since) but car traffic. For 25 years after World War II, there was basically one car per family. Now virtually everyone of driving age has a car, leading to an explosion in car traffic.

Anyone who tries to shop downtown, or attend the bars, restaurants, Shakespeare, Varsity Theater or Oregon Cabaret Theatre, can never count on finding a spot NOW, let alone with 21 fewer spaces.

The diets on East Main, North Main, and Siskiyou Blvd have been a great blessing for everyone, but especially the bikers. And it did not affect the parking for the businesses in those areas. But downtown is truly different - it would decisively impact the businesses here.

This is simply a disaster. The negative impact on local businesses would far outweigh the benefits for bikers. Please reject this idea.

Ed Wight
Office Manager
Cripple Creek Music

P.S. One quick anecdote. 20 years ago, my mother was in her 70s and walked with a cane. She loved to buy Hallmark greeting cards at Ashland's only outlet for them, the Ashland Drug Store on when it was still on Main Street. She couldn't walk very far from her car - and she could rarely find a parking space close to the Drug Store THEN. And again, that was 20 years ago.

So she started driving to the Hallmark Store in Medford, depriving another Ashland merchant of her business solely because she couldn't find a parking space. She died in 2004, showing you how long Ashland has had a parking problem downtown.

Please don't make it worse.

SUBMITTED AT MEETING

Tami Campos

From: Stuart Green <sgreen@ashlandfood.coop>
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 2:54 PM
To: Tami Campos
Subject: Comment on proposal to realign East Main St.

Greetings Tami,

I am the Sustainability Coordinator at the Ashland Food Co-op. I'm sending this comment in support the proposal to create dedicated bike lanes, reduce the number of vehicle lanes, add traffic control signals, and improving pedestrian infrastructure.

I interface often with community members and visitors; in my experience most folks are supportive of developing alternatives to conventional transportation. Having a town that is pedestrian and bike friendly is key to our Ashland identity and experience, and directly bolsters our tourism-heavy economy. In addition, developing lower-carbon, multi-modal transportation options will be an important strategy as Ashland begins forming the City's Climate and Energy Action Plan.

Thank you,
Stuart Green

--
Stuart Green
Sustainability Coordinator
Ashland Food Co-op
(541) 482-2237

Conditions/concerns expressed by the committee:

- Accommodates future traffic
- Limiting the disruptions to downtown businesses
- Not eliminating the total number of parking spots
- Parking fees used for parking related uses
- Costs for 3 to 2 lanes
- Costs for improvements
- Where are the funds coming from?
- Timeline for building the package (downtown multi-modal economic development) – legislators
- Articulate modeling information (time it takes to get from A to b, etc.)
- Deal with parking crisis but not eliminate 21 parking spaces
- Parking spaces away from the businesses will sabotage this town
- Include a signal at the intersection of Main and First?
- Bike lane width is tight on bridge that goes over Water Street
- Changing the plan itself – more explanation is needed, other than maps for the redesign of Main Street
- The plan should be very clear before it goes to the Transportation Commission for approval
- Plan needs overarching statement for their efforts of what the intention is

Possible additions of 2-hour parking spaces in the downtown Core on existing streets
JG – 4/19/2016

1. Add additional parking on Granite and Church Streets (1 to many spaces) – It looks like one space can be added between the last space on Granite and the corner. Also, we could change part or all of those first blocks up from Main St. to parking on both sides.
2. If/when the Beaver slide goes out, it should be possible to add two or three spaces on the east side of Water Street (2 to 3 spaces).
3. From the picture, it looks like two or three spaces could be added along the west side of the Plaza (more if it is possible to use angle parking (2 to 6 spaces?))
4. Change to angle parking on Main between Oak and Pioneer. (3+ spaces).
5. Explore angle parking along the north side of E. Main between Pioneer and Gresham. (could add 2 or 3 spaces or more per block).
6. Eliminate the Xs where there are three on a block and replace with more full spaces, “smart car” spaces, bike or motor cycle spaces.
7. The bus parking on Pioneer between Lithia and Main might be reduced (depending on demand) or changes in hours so that people could park there (maybe for one hour? During the morning before the buses arrive. (could be as many as 6 spaces?)).
8. Hargadine has both-sides parking between second and first, but only one side between first and Pioneer. Could we add a couple of spaces on the north side of Hargadine between the fire hydrant and the driveway to the garage? (2 spaces).
9. On First Street between Lithia and Main, add parking on the west side of the street. If it is too narrow, the street could be changed to one-way in either direction; I would suggest one-way south-bound to improve safety at Lithia and First. (up to 6 spaces?).
10. Around the Post Office, there appear to be many 15 minute spaces (two on Lithia way and 5 or 6 on First). Maybe all are not needed, so after study some could be converted to 2-hour slots. (2 spaces or more)
11. Move the drive-by mail drop from Lithia Way to the Post Office parking lot. That would free two spaces on Lithia Way and improve safety along that stretch. (2 spaces).
12. There is a permanent loading zone in front of the Ashland Springs and two loading zones on 1st St. Maybe two would suffice. (1 Space),
13. Add angle parking (cars only) on one side of 2nd St, between Main and Hargadine, similar to the situation on First. That could add anywhere from 4 to 10 spaces along 2nd. Note: I would

make the angle slots on First cars only as well (Long trucks block the street and block vision.(4 plus spaces).

14. One last thought that might not add any spaces, but might make life better for parkers, is to line in the spots on Hargadine. I often see wasted spaces between cars because of the way people park.

Tidings Editorial – April 27, 2016

Limited parking and increased congestion in the downtown core of Ashland has been a concern for many years. To address this ever increasing concern and to develop a strategy to improve the current conditions, the Mayor and Council appointed a Downtown Parking Management and Circulation Study Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on November 5, 2013. Their mission is to provide the Council with critical planning and policy input for parking management alternatives, delivery management strategies, recommend multi-modal (bicycle parking, bicycle lanes, transit, and pedestrian travel and safety) and improvements to the downtown streetscape while maintaining and enhancing the economic vitality of Ashland's vibrant downtown core.

This 13 member committee is composed of seven stakeholders, including representation from downtown business owners, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, two Chamber of Commerce Board members, two Planning Commissioners and two Transportation Commissioners have been meeting monthly since inception. As the primary staff support for this amazing group of visionary local experts, I couldn't be more proud of their dedication and commitment to providing the Council a plan with recommendations to modernize the downtown transportation system and enhance the economic vitality of the downtown core.

Once the Ad-Hoc committee completes a draft plan they will host a community forum (likely in October or November) to present the plan for public input. Staff will also present the draft plan at local civic clubs, and the committee will develop additional feedback by using the Open City Hall forum on the City of Ashland's website.

With the assistance of Rick Williams Consulting, a parking management expert, the committee has completed their work on the long term parking strategy for downtown. Examples of the recommendations include:

- Adopting an 85% rule as the optimum occupancy standard for measuring performance of the parking supply and triggering specific management strategies and rate ranges;
- Developing a job description and hiring a Downtown Parking Coordinator for the City of Ashland;
- Establishing a Downtown Parking Advisory Committee (DPAC) consisting of downtown stakeholders to assist in program implementation and continual review;
- Developing a reasonable schedule of parking data collection to better assess performance of downtown parking;
- Identifying off-street shared use opportunities and feasibilities, establishing goals for transitioning employee parking, begin outreach to opportunity sites, negotiating shared use agreements, and assigning employees to facilities (see Downtown Ashland Parking utilization map on next page);

The committee is currently working on developing multi-modal strategies. Some of the ideas staff has presented to them so far include:

- A draft concept plan that reduces East Main from three lanes to two lanes, adds a bicycle lane, widens sidewalks and provides timed truck loading zones;
- Removes vehicular traffic from the Beaver Slide by creating a multi-use path for bicycles and pedestrians;
- Constructs a roundabout at the intersection of Pioneer/Fork/Hargadine;
- Street Improvements on A Street and B Street for improved pedestrian and bicycle activity and safety; and

- Includes downtown projects identified in the previously adopted Transportation System Plan.

The proposed 3-lane to 2-lane configuration as reported in the paper recently has generated a significant amount of interest and it's important for citizens to understand the committee is still working through questions and concerns, regarding costs and timelines before they approve this element moving forward. The potential conversion is a true multi-modal idea that improves travel for all users. It creates a bike lane, shortens the distance for pedestrian crossings on E. Main St., and widens the sidewalks for enhanced pedestrian flow. It also includes specific timed truck loading zones which will eliminate the current lane blockages when delivering product to our local businesses.

The loading zones and the bicycle lane between Helman and the 3rd will displace about 18 (not eliminate) parking spaces. However, 15 of those displaced parking stalls will become available for parking after 4 pm each day. Those displaced parking spaces will have to be found before this concept could ever be supported by a majority of the committee. As previously mentioned, one way to accomplish this is to lease private parking spots for the public. The committee will continue to brainstorm other options as well.

If you are interested in viewing the draft parking recommendations or to view a map of the proposed East Main 3-lane to 2-lane configuration you can find them at the city web site (<http://www.ashland.or.us/CCBIndex.asp?CCBID=241>).

For additional questions you can contact Mike Faught, Public Works Director, at mike.faught@ashland.or.us