Normal Avenue Neighborhood Plan - Mobility Framework

Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation System

The bicycle and pedestrian circulation system for the Normal Avenue Neighborhood Plan will build on the existing facilities in the area, and will develop consistent with the guidance provided by the City's Transportation System Plan (TSP). Existing facilities in the study area include:

- Sidewalks along all of Ashland Street and Tolman Creek Road, and along portions of Walker Avenue and Clay Street. East Main Street has shoulders which can be used for pedestrian movement pending improvement of this street when the inclusion of sidewalks would normally be coupled with urban type development.

- Bicycle facilities along all of Ashland Street, Tolman Creek Road and Walker Avenue. The shoulders along East Main Street can be used by bicyclists until urban development in the area provides the opportunity to add bicycle lanes. These bicycle lanes should be a minimum of 6-feet wide consistent with the City's street design standards and the 40 mph speeds currently allowed along this street.

- Existing multi-use trails in the vicinity including the Central Bike Path along the railroad corridor that runs immediately south of the study area. The Bear Creek Greenway runs between Ashland and Central Point, currently terminating at the Ashland Dog Park near the Helman Street/Nevada Street intersection. Trail development and improvements are proposed for the Clay Creek corridor (along the eastern boundary of the Normal Avenue Plan area), and the Hamilton Creek Corridor paralleling Tolman Creek Road. Both of these proposed corridors would connect to a future proposed extension of the Bear Creek Greenway that would be located north of the Normal Avenue Plan area.

The development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Normal Avenue plan area should address the following considerations:

- Provision of bicycle lanes and sidewalks along Normal Avenue, which is identified in the TSP as a city avenue. The City's Street Design Standards call for the provision of a 2-lane or 3-lane facility including median or center turn lane, along with 6-foot bicycle lanes, planting strips and sidewalks on both sides. Design speed for an avenue should be between 20 and 25 mph.

- Sidewalks should be provided on all other streets within the plan area, but bicycles will share the street with motorized traffic.

- As appropriate, provision should be made to accommodate future development of the Clay Creek corridor multi-use trail to connect the Normal Avenue area with both a future extension of the Bear Creek Greenway on the north and the Talent Irrigation District Trail on the south.

- Provision for safe bicycle and pedestrian circulation should be provided to the Ashland Middle School and Walker Elementary School on Walker Avenue to the west of the Normal Avenue area. Development of a connection between Normal Avenue and Walker Avenue north of the

railroad tracks should be considered, but care needs to be taken to avoid a large wetland in this area. Conceivably, this connection could include all travel modes, or just active transportation modes like bicycles and pedestrians.

Automobile Circulation System

The automobile circulation system for the Normal Avenue Neighborhood Plan will build on the existing facilities in the area, and will develop consistent with the guidance provided by the City's Transportation System Plan (TSP). Existing functionally-classified facilities in the study area include:

- Two city boulevards – Ashland Street and East Main Street. Ashland Street provides two travel lanes in each direction with signals and left turn lanes at key intersections. The Ashland Street cross-section appears to be fully built-out in most locations. East Main Street provides a single through lane in each direction and could be improved as adjacent properties along its south side increase in land use intensity. The north side of this street represents the Ashland Urban Growth Boundary, so no development is anticipated over the next 20 years.

- Four city avenues – Walker Avenue, Normal Avenue, Clay Street, and Tolman Creek Road. Particularly relevant to the Normal Avenue Plan is the functional designation of Normal Street and the cross-sectional requirements identified in the City's Street Standards. Either a 2-lane or a 3-lane cross-section is required with narrow lane widths, 6-foot on-street bike lanes and adjacent parking. A planted parking strip and setback sidewalk of at least 6-feet in width is also required.

The development of automobile circulation facilities in the Normal Avenue plan area should address the following considerations:

- Street connectivity is recommended through the Normal Avenue plan area to reduce travel demand on the adjacent east/west boulevards (East Main Street and Ashland Street). Connections should be considered to the west to provide access to Walker Avenue (full street if possible or bike/pedestrian facilities at a minimum), and to the east to Clay Street via existing Creek Drive and/or other possible connections. Care needs to be taken to minimize impacts to existing wetlands and/or stream crossings.

- The City's street standards recommend that, where possible, block lengths be a maximum of 300 to 400 feet with a maximum perimeter of 1,200 to 1,600 feet to provide good connectivity for all travel modes.

- Where and as appropriate, traffic calming measures should be considered to keep travel speeds in the range of 20 to 25 mph. Consideration should also be given to minimizing traffic impacts on the existing lower density residential area on the west side of Normal Avenue south of the existing large wetland.

Street Alignment Opportunities to Maximize Solar Exposure

Street alignments should provide for maximizing building solar orientation and shading opportunities, consistent with the City's Land Use Code. In particular, the code speaks to incorporating both passive and active solar strategies in the design and orientation of buildings and public spaces. Where the site configuration and locational constraints permit, buildings should be oriented with the long sides facing

north and south. Additionally, the code speaks to providing shading for south-facing windows, and exterior shading devices for east and west-facing windows during periods of peak cooling demand.

Main and Clay Street Access Points

As site layout alternatives are developed, additional access will likely be needed onto East Main Street and Clay Street. As East Main Street is a designated city boulevard, its access spacing for streets and driveways is 300 feet. Access spacing along an avenue like Clay Street is 100 feet, however it's appropriate that the block size parameters mentioned above provide the necessary guidance to the spacing of additional connections to Clay Street. Additionally, the existing neighborhood south of Creek Drive will constrain the opportunities for connectivity to Clay Street.

Transit Service and Transit Stops

Existing transit service is currently provided along Tolman Creek Road to the east of the Normal Avenue plan area, and along Ashland Street to the south. In both instances, the walking distance between the site and existing transit route alignment is greater than the reasonable transit access walking distance of ¼ mile to a bus stop. At some point in the future, if there is sufficient density along East Main Street and/or in the general vicinity of the Normal Avenue plan are, the City should engage RVTD in conversations about providing additionally transit service. Potentially, this service could be oriented toward development of the SOU campus and other school facilities along Walker Avenue and include more intensely developed portions of East Main Street. At a minimum bus stops, in the area should be spaced no more than 1,000 feet apart. Shelters, seating, trash receptacles and waiting areas should conform to City and RVTD standards. Vehicular circulation through the Normal Avenue plan area should not preclude the provision of direct transit service.

Safety Considerations

Analysis conducted for Task 5 indicates that the primary safety concern in the larger Normal Avenue study area is the intersection of Ashland Street with Tolman Creek Road. Five year crash history at this intersection does not exceed the rates for a similar facility published in Table II by ODOT, but it does slightly exceed the average rate for similar locations in the City of Ashland. Some preliminary recommendations for addressing this safety problem were identified in the TSP and additional investigation should be undertaken.