

Council Business Meeting

September 5, 2017

Title: North Main Road Diet Update
From: Michael R. Faught Public Works Director
Mike.Faught@ashland.or.us

Summary:

At the December 3, 2013, City Council meeting the Council voted to retain the North Main Road Diet three-lane configuration with recommended modifications. At Council's direction, staff contracted Southern Oregon Transportation Engineering (SOTE) to complete another evaluation of the road diet. The evaluation was completed and SOTE continues to recommend leaving the road diet in place with design modifications.

The road diet evaluation was presented to the Transportation Commission at their January 26, 2017 public meeting. The Commission recommends the Council approve the additions of two new crosswalks, a preliminary design to alter the Helman and Main street traffic signal and restriping from the current merge on Lithia Way to Bush Street, upgrading the Laurel Street traffic signal, and improving sight distance on North Main for the Hersey Street and Wimer Street approaches.

Actions, Options, or Potential Motions:

Move to approve the following Transportation Commission's recommendations:

1. Construct the two budgeted crosswalks with flashers (RRFB's) at Nursery Street and Van Ness Avenue as recommended by the traffic engineer and Transportation Commission.
2. Complete preliminary engineering designs for the alteration of the Helman St. and N. Main St. traffic signal removal and restriping of the N. Main merge to Bush St., in order to have appropriate materials for public outreach meetings and a public hearing at a Transportation Commission meeting prior to making a recommendation to the City Council.
3. Work with ODOT to upgrade the traffic signal at Laurel and Main and improve sight distance on the Hersey St. and Wimer St. at North Main St.

Staff Recommendation:

The Public Works staff and the Transportation Commission recommend approval of the following:

1. Construct the two budgeted crosswalks with flashers (RRFB's) at Nursery Street and Van Ness Avenue as recommended by the traffic engineer and Transportation Commission.
2. Complete preliminary engineering designs for the alteration of the Helman St. and N. Main St. traffic signal removal and restriping of the N Main merge to Bush St. in order to have appropriate materials for public outreach meetings and a public hearing at the Transportation Commission prior to making a recommendation to the city council.

3. Work with ODOT to upgrade the traffic signal at Laurel and Main and improve sight distance on the Hersey St. and Wimer St. approaches.

Resource Requirements:

The cost to complete the following recommendations are as follows:

Removing the Helman Street / North Main Street signal and restripe North Main Street to transition sooner into the road-diet	<i>Cost estimates will have to be developed if the council decides to add this project.</i>
Restriping North Main Street at Bush Street to include a center two-way-left-turn lane (TWLTL)	Included in the \$100K Super Sharrow project (included in the recently adopted 2017-19 biennium budget)
Adding a pedestrian island and crosswalk on North Main Street at Van Ness Avenue and North Main Street at Nursery Street with RRFBs *note: Design complete, still requires ODOT approval	\$75,000 (included in the recently adopted 2017-19 biennium budget)
Upgrade the traffic signal at Laurel Street	<i>Cost estimates will have to be developed if the council decides to add this project.</i>
Improving sight distance for the Hersey Street and Wimer Street approaches to North Main	<i>Cost estimates will have to be developed if the council decides to add this project.</i>
Removing a portion of the center median on North Main Street at Main Street to provide a center refuge lane for side street vehicles to pull into when turning onto North Main. *note: Design complete and approved by ODOT	\$80,000 (included in the recently adopted 2017-19 biennium budget)
On-going road diet evaluation	\$15,00 per year

Policies, Plans and Goals Supported:

Environment: 13.3 Support alternative transportation choices.

Background and Additional Information:

The year-long test of the North Main Road Diet pilot project was completed on October 20, 2013. The project re-striped North Main Street from four lanes (two travel lanes in each direction) to three lanes (one travel lane in each direction with a center turn lane) and bike lanes. The goal of the pilot project was to improve safety for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, while maintaining travel times in the North Main corridor.

A summary of SOTE report (see attached) is as follows:

Engineering Technical report summary

Activity	Performance Prior To Road Diet	Actual Performance with Road Diet
Crash Data	120 reported crashes (Oct 2002 – Oct 2012) Average 10 per year	30 reported crashes (Oct 2013 – Oct 2016) Average 6 per year (of the 30 there were 11 crashes in 2016)
85 th Percentile Speed	31 (NB) and 32 (SB) (September 2012)	31 (NB) and 32 (SB) (June 2016) 30 (NB) and 32 (SB) August 2016 30 (NB) and 31 (SB) October 2016
Bicycle Volumes-p.m. peak period	26 (Laurel), 22 (Maple) (September 2012)	19(Laurel), 15 (Maple) (September 2016)
Pedestrian Volumes-p.m. peak period	36 (Laurel), 17 (Maple) (September 2012)	72 (Laurel), (Maple) 20 (2016)
Travel Time (NB) -p.m. peak period	235 seconds (September 2012)	236 seconds (2016)
Travel Time (SB) -p.m. peak period	233 seconds (September 2012)	234 seconds (2016)

The traffic engineer does note that the peak hour analysis did not always accurately represent all situations. Specifically, September and October 2016, spikes in traffic caused increase congestion between 8:25 am and 8:35 am. SOTE worked with ODOT to make signal timing changes at Maple and Main and the queuing that was observed reduced significantly, but inbound travel continued to be slow between Schofield Street and Maple Street. SOTE recommends evaluating this intersection again in September and October 2017.

The final technical report summary concludes that “from a technical standpoint, North Main Street operates better as a 3-lane facility than it did as a 4-lane facility.” In addition, the engineer points out that the 3-lane configuration meets the goals and polices of the City’s transportation plan because it functions as a multi-modal facility. The recommendation is to leave the road diet in place but not make permanent changes to allow for emergencies, special events or sudden change in traffic patterns.

While the traffic engineer recommends keeping the 3-lane configuration, the following modifications are also recommended as improvements:

- Removing the Helman Street / North Main Street signal and restriping North Main Street to transition sooner into the road-diet;
- Restriping North Main Street at Bush Street to include a center two-way-left-turn lane (TWLTL);
- Adding a pedestrian island and crosswalk on North Main Street at Van Ness Avenue;
- Adding a pedestrian crosswalk on North Main Street at Nursery Street with RRFBS;
- Upgrading the traffic signal at Laurel Street;
- Improving sight distance from Hersey Street and Wimer Street;
- Removing a portion of the center median on North Main Street at Main Street to provide a center refuge lane for side street vehicles to pull into when turning onto North Main;
- Continue to monitor the North Main Street corridor at least on a quarterly or biannual basis and include an a.m. peak period evaluation.

Transportation Commission Recommendation

At its January 26, 2017 meeting, the Transportation Commission heard the road diet update from the traffic engineer and additional public input on the road diet was heard and the commission voted to recommend the following modifications to North Main in order to improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

1. Implementing the two crosswalks with flashers (RRFB's) at Nursery Street and Van Ness Avenue as recommended by the traffic engineer.
2. Recommended that staff to complete preliminary designs to alter the Helman Street traffic signal and restriping N. Main at Bush Street in order to have the materials necessary to have an informative public hearing prior to making a recommendation to the city council.
3. Recommended upgrading the traffic signal at Laurel and Main and improving sight distance from Hersey to Wimer Street.

Attachments:

SOTE Road Diet Report

Transportation Commission Minutes – January 26, 2017

SOUTHERN OREGON TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING, LLC

319 Eastwood Drive - Medford, Or. 97504 – Office 541.608.9923 – Cell 541.941.4148 –Email: Kwkp1@Q.com

January 18, 2017

Mike Faught, Public Works Department
City of Ashland
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520

RE: Post Road Diet Assessment – June-August-October of 2016

Southern Oregon Transportation Engineering, LLC evaluated the North Main Street road diet for 2016 to determine how the facility is operating since it was implemented in September of 2012. The evaluation considered side street delay, main street delay, intersection level of service, gaps, speeds, travel times, crashes, and average daily traffic.

Data Collection

Data collected during the months of June, August, and October included:

- Side street delay on Hersey and Wimer Street during the PM peak hour (seconds per vehicle)
- Side street queue lengths on Hersey and Wimer Street during the PM peak hour (number of vehicles waiting at any one time)
- Main Street delays and queue lengths at Hersey and Wimer Street during the PM peak hour
- Intersection level of services during the PM peak hour (A-F)
- Available gaps on Main Street at Hersey and Wimer Street for side street traffic during the PM peak hour
- Average travel times during the AM and PM peak hours
- 85th percentile speeds
- Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes

Data collected during June and October included:

- PM peak hour turning movements at Maple Street, Glenn/Coolidge Street, Hersey/Wimer Street, Manzanita Street, and Laurel Street

Pre vs. Post Road Diet - North Main Street Performance

- CRASH HISTORY – The North Main Street corridor between Schofield Street and Helman Street experienced 120 reported crashes within a 10-year period from 2002 to 2012, or an average of 12 crashes per year. A fatality resulted from a collision in June of 2005 between Schofield and Sheridan. The location with the highest occurrence during that 10-year period was shown at the stop-controlled intersection of Wimer/Hersey/Main Street, where there were 39 reported crashes with a maximum of 7 crashes in any one single year.

Since October of 2012, the following crashes have been reported:

	Pre-2011	Pre-2012	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Maple/Main	2	1	1	3	2	1	1
Glenn/Coolidge/Main	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Nursery/Main	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Hersey/Wimer/Main	3	4	0	2	1	1	1
Van Ness/Main	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Manzanita/Main	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Central/Main	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<u>Laurel/Main</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Crashes	8	8	1	6	8	11	4
Injury from Crash	(5)	(3)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(2)	(1)

Crash data, since implementation of the road diet, shows a decrease in number of collisions along North Main Street the first year and then begins to increase each year after until 2017. This increase is most significant in 2015 and 2016 at Laurel Street, where we're seeing an increase in rear-end collisions as a result of congestion on North Main Street. The increase in congestion relates to an increase in traffic on North Main Street, specifically south of Van Ness Avenue near Laurel Street. Average daily traffic volumes on North Main Street have increased at a rate of 0.7% per year between 2013 and 2016 south of Maple Street near Coolidge Street, but this rate of increase is 3.1% near Van Ness Avenue, which shows a greater increase where the spike in rear-end collisions have been occurring. The overall rise in corridor collisions between Maple and Laurel Street since 2014 has decreased to date in 2017 with four reported through June.

The severity of collisions has predominantly been property damage only since implementation of the road diet. Crashes in 2011 and 2012 showed a higher percentage of injury resulting from crashes than in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 to date. That decrease in injury is related to the change in type of collision, which currently involves rear-end collisions more than any other, and roadway speed where the crash is occurring. Speeds measured on North Main Street are lower near Laurel Street where an increase in crashes since 2014 has been occurring. The crash data provided in the year 2017 column above includes crashes through June. Two additional crashes occurred at the southern merge transition heading outbound. All crashes reported in 2017 to date have been rear-end collisions with the exception of one turning collision at Wimer/Hersey/Main, which involved a drunk driver.

- **PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE ACTIVITY** – Prior to implementation of the road diet, pedestrian and bicyclist volumes were gathered during peak periods at the intersections of Laurel/Main and Maple/Main. There were 36 pedestrians and 26 bicyclists counted during a 2-hour p.m. peak period at Main/Laurel and 17 pedestrians and 22 bicyclists at Main/Maple along North Main Street.

Since implementation of the road diet, pedestrian and bicyclist volumes were measured in 2013, 2014, and 2016. Results are provided below:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Pre-road diet</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2016</u>
Laurel/Main	36 ped/26 cyclist	59 ped/17 cyclist	61 ped/18 cyclist	72 ped/19 cyclist
Maple/Main	17 ped/22 cyclist	17 ped/13 cyclist	29 ped/18 cyclist	20 ped/15 cyclist

Pedestrian activity along North Main Street has increased since implementation of the road diet. Bicyclist activity decreased the first year and then showed a slight incline since 2013, but this data is the most challenging to compare because pre road-diet data used in this analysis was data gathered in April of 2011 for the road diet project as well as data gathered in 2009 for the City’s Transportation System Plan, and it does not always compare well to post road-diet data.

The best comparison we have from our post road-diet analysis is how pedestrian and bicyclist activity has changed since implementation, and for the most part we’ve seen an increasing trend in both, with the largest increase seen in pedestrian activity. A lack of similar increase in bicyclist activity is likely attributed to the bike route still being incomplete, in that it starts at the north end of the road diet and ends at the south end with no further connection in either direction. Activity should increase once additional connections are provided.

- **85th PERCENTILE SPEED** – Before implementation of the road diet, the 85th percentile speed on North Main Street was measured to be 31 miles per hour (mph) northbound and 32 mph southbound at a location just north of Coolidge Street. In 2013, 2014 and 2016, the 85th percentile speed was been measured in June, August, and October at the same location for comparison purposes. Speeds comparisons are shown below.

<u>Month</u>	<u>2013</u>		<u>2014</u>		<u>2016</u>	
	<u>NB</u>	<u>SB</u>	<u>NB</u>	<u>SB</u>	<u>NB</u>	<u>SB</u>
June	29	30	30	30	31	32
August	30	30	30	31	30	32
October	30	31	30	31	30	31

Data shows that speeds on North Main Street have remained close to the same since implementation of the road diet. There were slight reductions seen initially, but this has settled back to a speed similar to pre road-diet.

- **CORRIDOR TRAVEL TIMES** – Travel times were measured along North Main Street between Valley View Road-Maple Street and Maple Street-Helman Street in both directions before implementation of the road diet. Travel times have continued to be measured in 2013, 2014, and 2016 for comparison purposes. Results are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 – Travel Time Comparisons – North Main Street				
Segment	Travel Times (Minutes:Seconds)			
	Pre-road diet	2013	2014	2016
Helman Street to Maple Street (NB)	1:30	1:27	1:38	1:37
Maple Street to Valley View Road (NB)	2:25	2:23	2:20	2:19
Total Travel Time (NB)	3:55	3:50	3:58	3:56
Valley View Road to Maple Street (SB)	2:24	2:21	2:23	2:21
Maple Street to Helman Street (SB)	1:29	1:31	1:32	1:33
Total Travel Time (SB)	3:53	3:52	3:55	3:54

Data gathered in 2013, 2014, and 2016 show travel times for the section of Helman Street to Valley View Road along North Main Street are unchanged as a result of the road diet. Similar to what we saw in roadway speed, there was a slight reduction in travel time initially after implementation of the road diet, but this settled back to travel times similar to pre road-diet. The expectation of the road-diet in Kittelson & Associate’s road diet memorandum was that travel times would increase through the corridor 22 seconds northbound and 8 seconds southbound during the p.m. peak hour, and our data shows that the road-diet has operated better than expected.

It should be noted that travel times are based on averages measured throughout the year during the p.m. peak hour because the p.m. peak hour was the peak hour measured in the pre road-diet evaluation. This peak hour, in our opinion, doesn’t accurately represent all situations where spikes in traffic on North Main Street have caused increased congestion because many comments received over the past couple of years have been regarding congestion during the a.m. peak period. We observed these spikes in a.m. traffic in late 2016 during the months of September and October, when congestion appeared to be worse than usual, and worked with ODOT to make some signal timing changes at the intersection of Maple/Main. The timing changes, in our opinion, were an improvement and allowed more vehicles to get through each cycle length, but this should be evaluated again in the fall of 2017 after school begins. During the a.m. peak period several spikes were observed. An early spike between 7:55-8:05 a.m. occurred, which likely corresponded to the typical commuter traffic. Then a later spike was observed between roughly 8:25-8:35 a.m., which may be related to school traffic and later start times. The later a.m. spike was shown to be worst and resulted in approximately 10 minutes of slow moving traffic. We drove within this traffic on several occasions and witnessed the rolling speed to be between 5-10 miles per hour (mph) during heavy congestion inbound from the Animal Hospital to the railroad trestle, and 10-15 mph between the railroad trestle and Maple Street. Once past Maple Street, traffic resumed at normal speeds.

With the signal timing improvements in place, the queuing that was initially observed reduced significantly, but inbound travel continued to be slow between approximately Schofield Street and Maple Street.

- **INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE** – Traffic operations were evaluated at key intersections along North Main Street before and after implementation of the road diet. Intersection operations are provided in Table 2 for the worst operations to date and compared to what was reported for pre-road diet conditions.

Table 2 – North Main Street Intersection Operations – PM Peak Hour					
Intersection	Measure	Traffic Operations			
		Pre-road diet	2013	2014	2016
Maple Street/North Main Street	LOS	A	B	B	B
	V/C	0.58	0.77	0.82	0.85
	Delay (sec/veh)	7.8	17.3	17.7	19.3
Glenn Street/Main Street	LOS	C	C	C	C
	V/C	0.18	0.14	0.12	0.22
	Delay (sec/veh) From Glenn-WB	21.8	18.7	20.6	22.5
Hersey/Wimer/Main Street	LOS	<i>F</i>	D	D	D
	V/C	1.25	0.43	0.43	0.47
	Delay (sec/veh) From Wimer-EB	282.2	25.3	32.0	34.4
	Delay (sec/veh) From Hersey-WB	69.1	23.1	24.0	29.5
	LOS	<i>E</i>	C	C	C
Manzanita Street/Main Street	V/C	0.25	0.14	0.12	0.13
	Delay (sec/veh) From Manzanita-EB	41.0	16.6	18.4	24.4
	LOS	A	A	A	A
Laurel Street/Main Street	V/C	0.45	0.56	0.63	0.65
	Delay (sec/veh)	4.9	5.2	5.8	5.7

Note: Bold, italic results reflects operations that exceed performance standards

Table 2 shows stop-controlled intersections within the corridor having less delay in critical movements since implementation of the road diet. These include the intersections of North Main Street with Manzanita Street, Hersey/Wimer Street, and Glenn/Coolidge Street.

Intersection delay is primarily shown to increase at the Maple Street signalized intersection, which was predicted to occur as a result of the road diet. Increased delay at signalized intersections is the trade-off for decreased delay in critical movements at unsignalized intersections within a road diet, and this continues to work up to a certain point with increased traffic volumes. In 2016 there has been an increase in delay on side streets during peak periods as traffic volumes increase along North Main Street, but intersections continue to operate within acceptable performance standards, and the road diet continues to operate better than expected.

- **CORRIDOR QUEUING** – Queuing is the stacking up of vehicles for a given lane movement. Queue lengths are reported as the average, maximum, or 95th percentile queue length to the nearest 25-foot increment. Each 25-foot increment represents a single vehicle.

95th percentile queue lengths were measured at key intersections prior to the road diet and again for post-road diet conditions in 2013 and 2016. Results are provided in Table 3.

Table 3 – North Main Street Corridor Queue Lengths				
Intersection	Movement	Queue Lengths (Feet)		
		Pre-road diet	2013	2016
Maple Street/North Main Street	NBT	175	400	900
	SBT	175	475	525
	EB	NA	175	200
	WB	NA	50	50
Glenn Street/Main Street	NBL	50	0	25
	SBL	125	50	50
	EB	25	25	50
	WB	75	75	175
Hersey/Wimer/Main Street	NBL	100	50	75
	SBL	125	75	75
	EB	200	75	75
	WB	125	125	200
Manzanita Street/Main Street	NBL	25	25	50
	SBL	50	25	100
	EB	200	50	50
	WB	100	50	100
Laurel Street/Main Street	NB	150	250	325
	SB	125	150	650
	EB	75	75	75
	WB	75	50	50

Overall queuing within the corridor was less than expected in 2013 after implementation of the road diet, but has increased since 2014 and is longest at signalized intersections. Timing changes have been made by ODOT to help minimize this at the Maple Street intersection during the a.m. peak period, but this only recently occurred and we haven't had sufficient time to evaluate the changes. From early observations traffic congestion appeared to improve, but this should be looked at further.

- **PROPOSED DESIGN CHANGES** – A design change is still recommended at the intersection of Bush Street/Main Street to transition the road diet cross section further to the south so that a northbound left turn pocket can be added at Bush Street. Other recommendations include replacing exclusive left turn pockets with center two-way-left-turn-lanes, improving sight distance at intersections to increase visibility for side street traffic, and adding pedestrian crosswalks on North Main Street at Van Ness and Nursery Street.

Various combinations of removing or adding traffic signals at Laurel Street and Hersey/Wimer Street have been evaluated to determine what, if any, improvements can be made to the corridor with design changes, but the challenges pertain to sight distance limitations on Laurel Street as a result of removing a traffic signal, and queuing increases on North Main Street at Wimer/Hersey Street as a result of adding a traffic signal. After evaluating all of the alternatives, our recommendation is to upgrade the signal at Laurel Street and leave Hersey/Wimer/ North Main Street as a stop-controlled intersection. Queuing impacts from the various alternatives evaluated are provided in Figures 1-4 in the attachments.

SUMMARY:

After performing a quarterly review of the road-diet in 2016, it is our conclusion that the North Main Street corridor continues to operate better overall as a road-diet than it did as a four-lane facility and should remain. Delay for side street critical movements continues to be reduced at stop-controlled intersections, crashes within the corridor have been less severe, the speed and average travel time through the corridor has remained the same, and pedestrian activity has increased.

Since implementation of the road-diet, a collaboration of improvements has been recommended for the North Main Street corridor by us, committee members, ODOT, and citizens. We've evaluated many of the improvements and support the following design changes:

1. Removing the Helman Street / North Main Street signal and restriping North Main Street to transition sooner into the road-diet
2. Restriping North Main Street at Bush Street to include a center two-way-left-turn lane (TWLTL)
3. Adding a pedestrian island and crosswalk on North Main Street at Van Ness Avenue
4. Adding a pedestrian crosswalk on North Main Street at Nursery Street with RRFBs
5. Upgrading the traffic signal at Laurel Street
6. Improving sight distance from Hersey Street and Wimer Street approaches
7. Removing a portion of the center median on North Main Street at Main Street to provide a center refuge lane for side street vehicles to pull into when turning onto North Main.

It is also recommended that the North Main Street corridor continue to be monitored, at least on a quarterly or biannual basis, and include an a.m. peak period evaluation. Adequate data exists for the p.m. peak period to make conclusions and recommendations, but data for the a.m. peak period is limited and needs to be gathered. A summary of corridor travel times, side street delays, North Main Street delays, and available gaps is provided in the attachments.

This letter provides a summary of collected data results in 2016. If you have any questions or concerns with this assessment, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Parducci, PE PTOE

SOUTHERN OREGON TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING, LLC

Attachments: Figures 1-4
 Summary of post road-diet data



Pre/Post Road Diet - Data Summary 2012-2016

	<i>Pre</i>	13-May	13-Aug	13-Oct	14-May	14-Aug	14-Oct	Jun-16	Aug-16	Oct-16
Travel Time - Southbound - PM Peak Hour										
Segment										
Valley View - Maple Street (min)	<i>2:24</i>	2:25	2:28	2:10	2:30	2:29	2:10	2:23	2:22	2:18
Valley View - Maple Street (MPH)	<i>35</i>	35	34	39	34	34	39	35	36	37
Maple Street - Helman Street (min)	<i>1:29</i>	1:30	1:32	1:31	1:27	1:40	1:28	1:31	1:30	1:39
Maple Street - Helman Street (MPH)	<i>24</i>	23	23	23	24	21	24	23	23	21
Travel Time - Northbound - PM Peak Hour										
Segment										
Valley View - Maple Street (min)	<i>2:25</i>	2:29	2:23	2:16	2:18	2:26	2:16	2:17	2:20	2:21
Valley View - Maple Street (MPH)	<i>35</i>	34	35	37	37	35	37	37	36	36
Maple Street - Helman Street (min)	<i>1:30</i>	1:21	1:34	1:28	1:33	1:55	1:26	1:28	1:34	1:50
Maple Street - Helman Street (MPH)	<i>23</i>	26	22	24	22	18	25	24	22	19
Side Street Stopped Delay 3:30-5:30 PM (*7:00-9:00 AM)										
Wimer Delay		<i>PM</i>								
Avg Stopped Time (sec)		23.55	19.86	20.71	23.55	27.22	10.61	49.84	31.91	35.7
Max Stopped Time (sec)		90	100	146	108	175	72	219	195	170
Avg Queue (veh)	<i>1</i>	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Max Queue (veh)	<i>6</i>	4	6	3	4	3	3	4	3	4
Hersey Delay										
<i>Left/Throughs</i>		L/T	L/T	L/T	L/T	L/T				
Avg Stopped Time (sec)		24.56	25.91	16	43.11	29.13				
Max Stopped Time (sec)		113	62	35	130	94				
Avg Queue (veh)	<i>1</i>	1	1	1	0	1				
Max Queue (veh)	<i>2</i>	1	1	1	1	1				
<i>Right Turns</i>		Rt	Rt	Rt	Rt	Rt	LTR	LTR	LTR	LTR
Avg Stopped Time (sec)		22.95	19.52	23.27	38.62	21.73	13.04	30.54	28.76	36.19
Max Stopped Time (sec)		96	87	92	190	98	74	125	131	162
Avg Queue (veh)	<i>2</i>	2	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	1
Max Queue (veh)	<i>6</i>	10	6	5	6	5	4	6	6	6
North Main Street Delay										
<i>Northbound Lefts</i>		14-May	13-Jul	13-Sep	14-May	14-Aug	14-Oct	Jun-16	Aug-16	Oct-16
Number of Turns (veh)		83	72	70	89	77	81	91	86	98
Avg Stopped Time (sec)		8.47	12.63	8.13	7.82	10.66	20.19		10.93	17.61
Max Stopped Time (sec)		60	72	37	67	51	76		51	145
Avg Queue (veh)	<i>1</i>	1	1	1	0	0	0		0	0
Max Queue (veh)	<i>3</i>	1	3	2	2	3	4		3	4
<i>Southbound Lefts</i>										
Number of Turns (veh)		158	136	141	144	138	273	154	166	164
Avg Stopped Time (sec)		9.95	9.29	16.52	16.26	12.59	25.27		12.82	13.63
Max Stopped Time (sec)		93	75	145	111	85	126		69	78
Avg Queue (veh)	<i>2</i>	1	1	1	0	0	1		0	0
Max Queue (veh)	<i>7</i>	3	4	4	5	3	5		5	3
North Main Street Gaps at Hersey/Wimer 3:30-5:30 PM (*7:00-9:00 AM)										
Direction		<i>PM</i>								
Southbound		558	607	807	609	597	605	699	694	640
Northbound		496	522	668	344	538	473	557	613	475
Combined		137	144	268	69	129	96	146	186	113

ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
January 26, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Graf called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

Commissioners Present: Joe Graf, Danielle Amarotico, Dominic Barth, Sue Newberry Corinne Viéville, and David Young

Council Liaison Present: Stef Seffinger

SOU Liaison Absent: Janelle Wilson

Staff Present: Scott Fleury, Mike Faught, and Kyndra Irigoyen

Staff Present: Steve Mac Lennan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of December 15, 2016 minutes

The minutes were approved as amended.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC FORUM

Ted Hall 210 E Nevada St

He gave the commission briefing books for the East Nevada Street Bridge project. He met with Faught last week and gave him a briefing book as well. He said he would like the Commission to take a look at the options in the books.

Katelyn Carey 2000 Tolman Cr Rd

She said Bellview School traffic is backed up. The church across the street blocked off their parking lot, so parents cannot park there and pick up their children. The traffic backs up in both directions, extending past the stop light on Siskiyou. About 10-20 cars are backed up at one time. This is creating a dangerous situation for the children walking around and blocks emergency vehicles from getting through. She asked for police presence for a few days to direct traffic and to not let people hold up traffic trying to pull into the school.

Spike Breon 295 E Nevada St

He hopes the Commission will consider a pedestrian bridge that will handle emergency vehicles. He read from his attached letter.

NEW BUSINESS

Post Road Diet Analysis

Faught said we have started seeing some longer delays in the morning and asked Parducci to do some analysis. He wants to remind everyone that this was a multi-modal project that benefited bicycles, pedestrians, and automobiles. The road diet was not created for just bicyclists, it is for all modes of travel.

Parducci said they have been monitoring the road diet since 2013. She gathered data on the three busiest months of the year: June, August, October, and some in September. She said they have seen increased congestion and longer queue lengths, but overall not any significant changes in terms of how it is operating. They looked at crash data; there was a significant decrease in crashes the first year. Crashes have continually increased since then. Now we are seeing a lot more rear-end collisions, whereas before they were angle collisions. The collisions are less severe now. There has been an increase in pedestrian traffic. There has not been an increase in cyclist traffic. The road diet was installed to improve safety and better serve pedestrians and cyclists. She said from that perspective, the road

diet is doing that. Corridor travel time is about a second longer from Valley View to Helman St. There is a misconception that it takes longer, but people are getting stuck in these peak traffic times. The study is done during peak hours from 4:30-5:30 pm and 3:30-4:30 pm. She bases her studies off of the Kittleson study parameters. Intersection level of service has stayed relatively the same since 2013. Hersey/Wimer intersection has improved from an 'F' rating to a 'D' rating. There was a big jump in corridor queuing in 2016. Maple St has been the biggest issue for corridor queuing during the AM and the PM peak hours. Amarotico said the big change has been the change in school starting times, the high school starts at 8:30 am instead of 8 am. The high school gets out later now at 3:30 pm instead of 2:45pm. Graf said the majority of classes at SOU only meet Monday through Thursday, so that will make a difference in traffic.

Recommendations:

1. Removing the Helman St/N Main St signal and restriping N Main St to transition sooner into the road-diet
2. Restriping N Main St at Bush St to include a center two-way-left-turn lane
3. Adding a pedestrian island and crosswalk on N Main St at Van Ness Ave
4. Adding a pedestrian crosswalk on N Main St at Nursery St with RRFB's
5. Upgrading the traffic signal at Laurel St
6. Improving sight distance from Hersey St and Wimer St approaches

Parducci also recommends continuing to monitor the road diet on N Main St with an AM peak period evaluation.

Don Stone 395 Kearney St

He said his input is from personal perception. There has been increased congestion, increase in pedestrians, not much of an increase in bicyclists. He thought the road diet was nonsense when it was put in and has not changed his mind since. If you are driving 10-15 MPH, the sense is that you are in a traffic jam, which creates tension. He thinks that the road diet is something that should be put back to the way it was, with four lanes. He recommends that it be put back to four lanes and increase the speed limit to 30 MPH.

George Kramer 386 N Laurel

He has lived on N Laurel for almost 40 years. He thought it was a bad idea when the road diet was adopted. There is one route to the west and one way to get in and out. He asked how many of the commissioners live up or down the hill from N Main St on the road diet and have to interact with it. Most of the data is about through traffic, which makes sense for traffic engineers. He said it is difficult to get on and off of it for people who live close to the road diet. He relies on the kindness of strangers to let him on and off N Main St. It is worse during tourism season. There has not been a big increase in bike and pedestrian traffic; we should complete the bike path and go back to four lanes on N Main St. He would like the commission to consider the people who have to merge on and off the road diet, not just the people who go through it. He agrees with updating the light at Laurel St. He has never met anyone who lives where he lives that thinks the road diet was a good idea. Seffinger asked if there was increase of traffic on side streets. Kramer said he thinks there is and uses alternate routes in the neighborhoods to avoid going on the road diet when going downtown.

Barbara Comnes 444 Park Ridge Pl

Her impression is that the traffic on Hersey has increased since the road diet. Traffic has been diverted onto Hersey to avoid going downtown. Parducci said they have not seen an increase of turning on and off Hersey but that does not mean further down it has not increased. Graf said it could also be because there are more homes on Mountain Ave, west of Mountain Meadows. Combs said it has been helpful having the center turn lane on N Main S to turn onto Hersey.

N. Main Hersey/Wimer Signal Analysis and Crosswalk Analysis

Parducci said if all traffic on Hersey is counted, five of the nine traffic signal warrants are met. She does not recommend that a traffic signal be installed at Hersey and Wimer St because of the queues it would create if a signal was placed there. Graf said this Commission has already approved putting in two crosswalks. We wanted to see if the light would work better opposed to crosswalks. He is worried the crosswalks may create a mess too. Parducci said crosswalks will randomly stop traffic, but not as long as the signal would. Parducci recommends that the crosswalks be installed.

Brian Comnes 444 Park Ridge Pl

Crossing N Main between Maple and Hersey is very difficult. He encourages crosswalks at Hersey with flashing lights. He opposes a traffic light there, unless there is a protected left turn light. He thinks it would be worse with a light.

Young said we do not want a light at Wimer St. The recommendations for the crosswalk are at Nursery because there is too much going on at Hersey and Wimer St. Comnes said that would be ok, as long as there is some protected way to get across N Main. Parducci said we recommended a crosswalk at Nursery with flashers.

Young recommends we do not move forward with the traffic light. Commission agrees. Graf reminded the Commission that they already approved putting in crosswalks; they just have to instruct staff to move it forward.

Newberry asked if there would be any improvements for lighting up the crosswalk. Most of the lights on the streets light up for cars but not for pedestrians. Parducci said in order to put sidewalks in they would have to meet our list of requirements and lighting is one of the most important.

Viéville m/s Barth recommend implementing two crosswalks with flashers at the locations recommended by the traffic engineer, with no light at Hersey and Wimer St. All in favor.

Faught said we need a recommendation to the City Council to continue with the road diet as Parducci has recommended it. He recommends notifying citizens about removing the traffic signal at Helman St for a public hearing, before recommending it to Council. At this public hearing, he recommends discussing the super sharrows concept so citizens can see how it all works together within the system and the road diet.

Newberry m/s Young to direct the Public Works Department to move forward with primary designs on altering the Helman St signal and restriping N Main at Bush St, so we have the materials necessary to have an informative public hearing that would be held before any approval was made or recommendations to the City Council. All in favor.

Viéville m/s Barth in favor of upgrading the traffic signal at Laurel and improving sight distance from Hersey St and Wimer St approaches. All in favor.

Transportation Commission Council Update

Graf said if anyone has anything to tell Council let himself or Fleury know.

TASK LIST

Discuss current action item list

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

CMAQ Grant Application-Chip Seal Project

Fleury said we received \$480,000, which will become available in October 2018.

Intersection Repair

None.

Vegetation Maintenance Program

None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Transportation System Plan Request for Qualifications (including transit feasibility study)

Fleury said if the Commission has anything to add he will need it by next week. Newberry said when we talk about transit we have to talk about pedestrians and when we talk about pedestrians we have to talk about ADA. She thinks those terms need to be mentioned in a transit RFP because the ridership is only going to be as good as the connectivity that takes people to get there.

Action Summary

None.

Accident Report

Mac Lennan said Bellview School has been an issue for several years; it does not have anything to do with the access to the church parking lot, although it has probably increased because of the church blocking access to their parking lot. During school, the inbound and outbound traffic is backed up. Mac Lennan said he does not have an issue with this, but the Commission can look at it. Viéville asked if it poses danger to the kids. Mac Lennan said no, because the cars are stopped. Newberry asked if there was any safe routes to school planning done to setup a better drop off and pick up. Faught said there are not, but we should talk to the superintendent of the school district about this issue. Newberry asked to talk to Faught about safe routes to school sometime.

Mac Lennan said he does not understand the peak times that were referenced in the post road diet analysis. He has spent hundreds of hours on N Main and there is no rhyme or reason why traffic backs up. He has seen it back up at 5 pm 5:30 pm, and at 9 pm. He is not sure there is a peak time.

Making an Impact Newsletter (December)

None.

COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Graf reminded the Commission that the next meeting has the Nevada Street Bridge project on the agenda.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

TSP update process
Nevada St Bridge (February)
CIP Budgeting

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kyndra Irigoyen
Public Works Administrative Assistant*

Spike Breon

From the 2005 Comprehensive plan
“Transportation Element”

...allow us to move towards a less auto-dependent community.

“Cut-through” traffic in established neighborhoods disrupts life and erodes the neighborhood’s integrity.

...automotive transportation is replaced by pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit. Ashland’s carrying capacity would dramatically increase and the quality of life would benefit.

But if Ashland is to retain and improve the quality of life, we must rethink our efforts towards transportation planning. Our past focus on accommodating the automobile must now be replaced by concerted efforts toward equally accommodating all modes of travel.

a need to change our transportation planning policies from auto-oriented to multi-modal,

Through measures designed to reduce reliance

on the automobile, ...avoid the air pollution, traffic and livability problems faced by other areas of the country.

It was believed that improved livability would result from easier car movement, but as we have experienced, the opposite has tended to occur.

The focus of the transportation system will not be limited to the automobile, but in addition, transportation options will be created where the number and length of trips can be reduced, and walking, biking, and transit become viable options for daily travel.

Ashland must ensure future livability by reducing dependence on the automobile and encouraging the use of other travel modes.

Transportation modeling professionals began to consider non-auto modes in response to passage of the Federal Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule.