

# **Meeting Summary**

## **St. Helens US 30 & Columbia Blvd./St. Helens St. Corridor Master Plan**

### **Business and Property Owners Meeting #1**

**October 7, 2013**

**12:30 – 1:30 pm**

**St. Helens Chamber of Commerce  
2194 Columbia Boulevard**

#### **1. Introductions and Meeting Objectives**

- Jacob Graichen, a planner with the City of St. Helens, welcomed the meeting participants. Approximately 20 property and business owners and other community members attended.
- The corridor planning project is being funded by a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The project is based on findings and recommendations from the Transportation System Plan (TSP) update process (2010-2011) and from City Council.
- Matt Hastie, a member of the project consultant team and project manager with the firm Angelo Planning Group, facilitated the meeting and presented general meeting objectives.
- The Project Management Team (PMT) consists of representatives from the City and ODOT, as well as consulting team members Matt Hastie and Chris Brehmer from Kittelson & Associates (transportation planning and engineering).
- The meeting PowerPoint presentation can be found under “Project Documents” on the project website, or here: [Kick-off Meeting/Corridor Planning Presentation](#).

## 2. Project Overview and Schedule

- Matt Hastie walked through the general project goals and schedule. The planning process is just beginning, so there are no plans or work products to review yet, with the exception of a draft set of project and study area goals and objectives.
- The project schedule/work plan summary can be found under “Project Documents” on the project website, or here: [Short-Term Schedule – Aug-Oct](#), [Work Plan Summary](#).
- There are three official Business and Property Owner (BP) meetings mostly earlier in the planning process. Participation is encouraged throughout the project, in BP meetings, Citizen Advisory Committee meetings, City Council and Planning Commission meetings, other public meetings, and through the project website. The project website provides contact information for the City (Jacob) and interactive comment opportunities ([www.sthelenscorridorplans.com](http://www.sthelenscorridorplans.com)).

## 3. Corridor Planning Overview

- Matt presented the general concepts of corridor planning, including the topics of:
  - Travel modes;
  - Functional classifications of roadways;
  - Streetscape elements;
  - Street furnishings;
  - Access management;
  - Roadway safety; and
  - Mobility, capacity, and congestion.
- The corridor planning overview slides can be found in the meeting PowerPoint presentation under “Project Documents” on the project website, or here: [Kick-off Meeting/Corridor Planning Presentation](#).
- Questions/discussion
  - Will different street design cross-sections be considered for Columbia/St. Helens?

Different cross-sections can be considered for corridor segments and/or corridor intersections. There are cross-sections established for City roads in 2011 TSP, and these provide starting points for refinement during this process. There is flexibility possible with the street and streetscape design in the Columbia/St. Helens corridor because of ample right-of-way.

- How much can be done with US 30?

Response: US 30 is a state highway and the portion of it that we are looking at represents a very large area. As a result, it will not be addressed in as much detail as the Columbia/St. Helens corridor. Attention on US 30 will be focused on the intersections, particularly the Gable and St. Helens Road intersections.

- How will rail be addressed?

Response: The focus on rail in this project will be mainly in terms of safety, including safety along rail right-of-way through the study area and at intersections/crossings. Rail will also be considered in terms of how it affects design ideas for US 30, given that one whole side of the highway in the study area is defined and constrained by the railroad.

## 4. Project Goals and Objectives

- The draft project goals and objectives document can be found under “Project Documents” on the project website, or here: [Draft Goals and Objectives](#).
- Matt presented the draft project goals and objectives handout, which addresses overall project goals, planning process and community involvement, economy and business support, transportation safety and mobility, and connectivity and streetscape aesthetics.
- Questions/discussion
  - Is this the only opportunity to comment on the goals and objectives?

Response: No, community members will be able to email or call the City (Jacob) and use the project website to provide feedback. The City Council also will review these goals and objectives during a work session on November 6. There will be several opportunities to refine them.

- How are the improvements that will be recommended in the plan going to be paid for?

Response: The funding will depend on the type of improvement and whether it is on a state or city roadway (e.g., state gas tax, local gas tax receipts, system development charges). Projects in the recently updated TSP (2011) have identified funding sources. Addressing and identifying funding will be part of this planning process. Projects recommended in this plan should be that much more competitive for grant funding because they will be part of a publicly vetted, adopted plan.

- Will the plan refer to other jurisdictions in developing and considering improvements? (E.g., Scappoose has had problems with root intrusion from street trees.)

Response: Yes, part of the process will be to make recommendations appropriate to St. Helens based on what is learned from the project team (including the City), advisory committees, and community members.

- There is an interest in doing something through design that encourages people to travel the entire Columbia/St. Helens corridor to Old Towne (rather than using it as a turn-around).
- There is research suggesting that making roads and intersections narrower and using fewer traffic controls encourages users to pay more attention and, thus, makes those roads and intersections safer.
- Will turning the Columbia/St. Helens one-way couplet into two-way streets be considered?

Response: There are mixed findings about the advantages and disadvantages of both one-way and two-way streets. There may not be the resources in this project to do the analysis needed to evaluate potential operations on the roads in a two-way scenario. The transportation engineers on the project team will be consulted and a more complete response to this question will be provided, possibly at the Citizens Advisory Committee that will take place later in the day.

- Will the project team be able to observe conditions in the study area around the clock?

Response: The transportation planning/engineering consultants were in St. Helens a lot during the TSP update process. Consultants will be here for regular meetings throughout the process but will rely on City staff and public input about particular notable conditions. (For example, the crosswalk at US 30/St. Helens is not very visible at night. Using color stamping or more reflective material to make this crossing more visible, and help with aesthetics there and in parts of Houlton, was suggested.)

## 5. Next Steps

- The project schedule/work plan summary and draft documents can be found under “Project Documents” and on the project website, or here: [Short-Term Schedule – Aug-Oct](#), [Work Plan](#).
- The project team will be working on a series of draft technical memoranda in the next month addressing existing transportation and land use regulations applicable to the project, access, transportation conditions, land use, and street design. The drafts will be reviewed at the next Citizen Advisory Committee meeting and first Technical Advisory Committee meeting in December, date and time to be determined.

- The draft Vision and Goals and Guiding Principles document will also be further developed before the next Citizen Advisory Committee meeting. A visioning meeting with City Council will be held in on November 6 to review that document. The date and time will be posted on the project website.

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