



South Broadway NEPA Process
Consensus Committee Meeting #11
September 21, 2006
Cameron Community Church
6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Meeting Notes

Executive Summary

Next Meeting

October 19th – Consensus Committee meeting to continue to define a consensus recommendation, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Cameron Community Church.

Discussion Highlights

This meeting focused on:

1. Updates on:
 - a. Suggested By-Pass - this suggestion was using the couplet alignment with Broadway a local four (two in each direction)-lane/two-way road and Acoma a four-lane/two-way for through traffic. This suggestion was analyzed and screened out because of the impacts to the RTD station and TOD.
 - b. Integration with Valley Highway EIS - South Broadway NEPA process and the Valley Highway EIS have different purpose and needs and therefore developed different preferred alternatives for the intersection of I-25 and Broadway. The alternatives preclude each other. The City continues to meet with CDOT to find a mutually acceptable process for the best interchange.
 - c. Bicycle/Pedestrian Overlay
 - d. Neighborhood Traffic Management Elements - The Consensus Committee reviewed the traffic calming elements. There was a desire to retain parking on some adjacent local streets and a discussion about narrowing Mississippi.
 - e. Right of Way Impacts - in almost all variations of the I-25/Broadway intersection all of the houses within the existing loop ramp would need to be acquired.
 - f. “Wedge and Wait” - Having looked at all that would need to be completed immediately, the City would build the final roadway width and use the outside lanes for interim parking. Although a trigger was not discussed, there was agreement that the trigger would initiate a public process to look at options.
2. Continuing to build committee consensus for a single preferred alternative. Elements where there was agreement of members in the meeting included: widening Broadway with interim parking lanes; wedge ramp; an identified trigger that will initiate a process to discuss future solutions; and there is possible agreement on narrowing Mississippi as much as possible.

MEETING NOTES

I. UPDATES

a. By-Pass Suggestion

This suggestion included using the couplet alignment with two-way traffic/two-lanes in each direction on Broadway for local traffic and two-way/two-lanes each direction on Acoma for thru traffic. The project team analyzed this element as Level 3A screening and ultimately screened it out due to impacts to RTD and the TOD.

This suggestion would require building a structure 23-25 feet over the light rail approximately at Acoma and then descending to grade before Mississippi. The bypass couplet alignment and structure would split the TOD and the light rail station. The required structure and alignment through the station would impact the existing light rail access and bus operations.

b. Update: Valley Highway Environmental Impact Statement (VHEIS)

The VHEIS final public hearing will be held on November 9, 2006 and the Record of Decision (ROD) is expected by the end of the year. The VHEIS preferred alternative includes a “tight diamond” for the I-25 exit/on ramps onto Broadway/Lincoln. The alternative includes a future on ramp for northbound I-25 from the west side of Broadway (removing existing hook ramp on the northeast side). This alternative does not include the wedge ramp which is emerging as the preferred alternative in the South Broadway NEPA process.

The VHEIS process has been going on for years and the process and documents are almost completed. At this point, the VHEIS cannot be dramatically altered to allow for or include the proposed South Broadway alternative for the I-25/Broadway on/off ramps, until the VHEIS ROD is signed. The South Broadway NEPA process began with the assumption that the VHEIS would be completed first, but the VHEIS process was delayed and the South Broadway process has “caught up.” The South Broadway NEPA process used current Funded projects as the No-Action Alternative because there was no VHEIS preferred alternative at the time of analysis. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has asked the VHEIS to identify their preferred alternative and complete their EIS process with the knowledge that the South Broadway process may recommend a different interchange alternative.

The City has had been meeting with CDOT to identify options for integrating the two projects. This coordination will continue to define how to gain mutual agreement on the best alternative for the interchange.

Currently the City is looking at four options for the I-25/Broadway intersection:

- o Option one – add a signal at Ohio, and leave the existing ramp onto northbound I-25

- Option two – move the access to the Lincoln cul-de-sac to Broadway, a right turn immediately north of/at I-25, with traffic signals at the Ohio/off-ramp, Lincoln/Exposition, and Broadway/Exposition
- Option three – improve the geometry of the existing northbound I-25 ramp to a larger radius loop. The impacts would include acquiring all the Lincoln cul-de-sac properties and Hurricane Drain, and closing access across Broadway on Ohio.
- Option four – add a northbound I-25 on-ramp off the wedge ramp (when on the wedge ramp - go to the right for northbound or to the left for southbound I-25 access. The existing northbound ramp would be removed (Option 4a) or remain (Option 4b) based on the operational requirements of turning traffic.

Questions & Answers

Question: Did the City meet with VHEIS project team and agree with the VHEIS alternative?

Answer: The City met with and agrees that the alternative solves the problem of improving the flow along I-25 in this area. The VHEIS alternative is the existing tight diamond for accessing/exiting I-25, with one difference – VHEIS includes a ramp to northbound I-25 from the west side of Broadway

Question: Was the VHEIS alternative modeled with a video simulation? What were the results?

Answer: Yes, and the results showed that the flow along I-25 is improved. For the I-25/Broadway interchange, however, the VHEIS alternative will operate at a worse condition than existing because of the proposed left turns to access I-25.

Question: Does a final solution for the intersection get implemented through an amendment to the VHEIS or through the South Broadway NEPA process?

Answer: Not sure. These are part of the ongoing procedural discussions between the City and CDOT.

Question: Will it be difficult to change the VHEIS outcome?

Answer: FHWA knew the processes may produce different alternatives, because VHEIS focus was the interstate while the South Broadway NEPA process focus was Broadway. FHWA assumed that the South Broadway NEPA process would alter the VHEIS alternative. Because of the delay in the VHEIS process, the South Broadway process has “caught up” with and is close to identifying a preferred alternative. The VHEIS process is almost complete. FHWA does not want to make a comprehensive change prior to the conclusion of the VHEIS process. The question is how to address the two alternatives after the Record of Decision for the VHEIS is signed.

Question: Will the City accept the VHEIS alternative if it doesn't help Broadway?

Answer: The City can accept the VHEIS as the baseline (No-Action Alternative) for the South Broadway process as means to identify further improvements to the I-25/Broadway interchange. It will help the South Broadway process for the VHEIS to formalize its preferred alternative in order to identify the interchange improvements.

Question: What properties will need to be taken in the VHEIS alternative?

Answer: Hurricane Drain and some or all houses on the Lincoln cul-de-sac would need to be acquired.

Question: What are the property takings required for the options suggested earlier for the South Broadway process?

Action: In all the options the Hurricane Drain property would be acquired. Option three is the only option that would require acquiring all the houses on the cul-de-sac.

Next Steps

A technical team representing the VHEIS project and South Broadway NEPA process will jointly look at both projects' criteria and develop an approach to mutually identify the best solution for the interchange. The timeframe is to have a solution by December/January. There may be little flexibility once the solution is developed by the technical team, but feedback from the Consensus Committee will be important. The South Broadway project team will keep the Consensus Committee informed through monthly updates, either electronically or in person.

c. Bike/Pedestrian Overlay

The map showed thin green lines for proposed sidewalk bicycle/pedestrian use and thick green lines for proposed multi-use trails including lighting, signing, street crossings, etc. Key elements of the overlay include:

- A future multi-use trail along the proposed Acoma alignment between the Broadway and Alameda stations (trail to be developed by others)
- Multi-use trail along the Acoma alignment between the Broadway station and Tennessee
- Link between Acoma/Tennessee and Tennessee/Buchtel is not shown because the assumption is people would use the street/sidewalks
- Mississippi – reconstruct the retaining wall from Broadway to the existing CML bridge to allow for a widened multi-use trail.
- Arizona/Grant – create a four way stop for the elementary school
- Louisiana - create a bike lane between Logan and Acoma. This would require removing parking. *Note: the Consensus Committee recommended against removing this parking.*
- Acoma – create a multi-use trail between Arizona and Louisiana, using the existing City-owned ROW along the railroad corridor (currently only 15-30 feet – not wide enough for a city street)
- Broadway - enhance the east side of Broadway between Ohio and Kentucky with lighting and signage.

- Arizona/Broadway intersection – incorporate bulb-outs
- Lincoln/Mississippi – limit left turns from Mississippi onto northbound Lincoln with a raised median on Mississippi across Lincoln. From a traffic standpoint, there is not enough room for back to back left turns from Broadway to Mississippi to Lincoln.

Questions & Answers

Question: What is the multi-use trail behind the Broadway developments and north of I-25?

Answer: This will be an enhanced side walk along what could possibly be a road in the future.

Question: Why is the street adequate for bicycle/pedestrian use east/west (on Tennessee), but not north/south?

Answer: There is an opportunity for a larger multi-use trail north/south and there is not as good an opportunity east/west. It may be an option to separate these bike/pedestrian elements from the NEPA process and require the developers to build them. This would allow the trails to be built regardless of the NEPA recommendations. If this option was followed, the bike/pedestrian green lines would not show up on the NEPA maps, but the City would work with the developers to have them built.

Question: Is it possible to create an improved opportunity for cars from Lionstone to directly access Buchtel by making a five-way stop at Logan/Mississippi/Buchtel?

Answer: City traffic engineers looked at this (separate from the NEPA process) and determined that the geometry was a significant traffic operations problem and will not allow for a five-way intersection there.

Question: How will bicyclists get from Washington Park to the South Platte River bike path if the proposed Louisiana bike connection dead ends into the CML?

Answer: It is more likely that bicyclists would cross the CML at Mississippi and not at Louisiana.

Question: Why reconfigure Kentucky? The reconfigured Kentucky results in a very wide crossing of Broadway which is not a good pedestrian experience.

Answer: The southbound off ramp and Kentucky intersections with Broadway were combined to remove one signalized intersections and improve the efficiency of southbound Broadway.

Comments and Suggestions

Comment: The key is the pedestrian experience, especially along Broadway. This should not be just about solving the “outside the neighborhood” traffic needs.

Suggestion: Need to increase pedestrian/cyclist safety. Put some physical or psychological barrier between bicyclists/pedestrians and car traffic. Use either an aesthetically pleasing jersey barrier along the sidewalk on Broadway to create greater safety or raise the sidewalk, or something else.

d. Neighborhood Traffic Management Elements

Key elements include:

- Connection to the north for walking/biking north along future Acoma towards the Alameda station.
- Bike station included as part of the TOD.
- Bulb outs to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance at Tennessee/Broadway.
- Raised median on Mississippi to preclude traffic turning northbound onto Lincoln.
- Four way stop at Arizona and Grant at the elementary school.
- No parking on the north side of Louisiana to add a 5 foot striped bike lane that visually narrows the street. *Note: the Consensus Committee recommended against removing this parking (see comment 'below').*

Comments/Suggestions

Comment: Parking on Louisiana is necessary to accommodate substantial overflow parking from the restaurants on Broadway. Parking needs to be maintained here on Louisiana.

Comment: The desire in redeveloping was to maintain or recreate the neighborhood grid and keep connection with the neighborhoods. If there is a median on Mississippi blocking Lincoln, that will create a barrier to this desired connection.

Suggestions:

- Need a traffic signal or stop signs at Sherman and Louisiana to slow traffic
- Need a four way stop at Lincoln and Sherman for safe pedestrian crossing
- Keep the no left turn onto Arizona from Broadway
- Put a stop sign or traffic signal at Mississippi and Sherman...Response: A light at Mississippi and Sherman will attract people to the intersection as a known location to cross
- Mississippi should be two-way, one lane for westbound traffic, two lanes for eastbound traffic, turn lane at Broadway, and parking on both sides
- Don't need traffic signal at Lincoln/Exposition

e. Wedge and Wait

When the City mapped the elements that needed to be done soon, there wasn't much left in its original alignment and the transitions between constructed and unconstructed portions were awkward. It makes sense to build the ultimate cross

section and use the outside lanes for interim parking – three thru lanes and one parking lane. The trigger would initiate a process to develop and assess possible solutions.

Suggestion: Stripe the parking lane

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Building Consensus

The Consensus Committee began to identify areas of agreement:

- Ultimate widening cross section with interim parking lanes
- Trigger would initiate a public process regarding what, if anything, is done
 - Undecided - what the Trigger is
- Wedge ramp – to provide better flow on Broadway
- Single traffic signal at Kentucky/Broadway/off-ramp – incorporate an on demand pedestrian signal and barriers to create a median safe zone for pedestrians to wait while crossing.
- Multi-use bike/pedestrian element on Mississippi from Broadway to the CMLoverpass

One element that was discussed with out resolution:

- Narrowing Mississippi to one through lane westbound, two through lanes eastbound, with turn lane at Broadway and parking on both sides.
ACTION: the Project Team will check volume and capacity to see how narrow Mississippi can be before forcing people into the neighborhood
 - Undecided – median and/or stop signs

IV. Next Steps

- Consensus Committee members will continue to speak with their constituents to help define the consensus recommendation on a preferred alternative
- The Keystone Center will contact Consensus Committee members to discuss elements where there is agreement
- **October 19th Consensus Committee meeting** - further develop a consensus recommendation on a preferred alternative

APPENDIX A

Consensus Committee Members and Alternates in Attendance:

Jim Carlson, West University Community Association
Max Cohen, Denver Design District
Lee Cryer, Regional Transportation District
Katie Fisher, West University Community Association
Tony Gengaro, Broadway Partnership
Jim Jones, West Washington Park Neighborhood Association
Steve Kaplan, Lionstone/Kaplan
Donna Krentz, Platt Park Resident's Coalition
Jim Lindbergh, Platt Park People's Association
Jason Longsdorf, Denver Public Works
Jim Paulmeno, Colorado Department of Transportation
Mike Vanderhoof, Federal Highway Administration
Shelly Watters, Platt Park People's Association
Kirk Webb, Colorado Department of Transportation
Rick Wells, Cherokee

In Attendance:

Tony Gross, Colorado Department of Transportation
Patricia Leslie, University of Denver student
Leela Rajasekar, Colorado Department of Transportation
Paul Ryan, Lionstone/The Kenney Group
Tony Pasquini, Broadway Area Revitalization District

Project Team in Attendance:

Mike Gill, Carter & Burgess
Larry Gibson, Carter & Burgess
Brendon Harrington, UrbanTrans

Facilitation:

Jody Erikson, The Keystone Center