Downtown Connectivity Study
Community Advisory Committee
Meeting #3 Summary

Tuesday December 3, 2019 1:00 – 4:00 PM
Richland City's Shops Room 110, 2700 Duportail Street, Richland

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Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Membership (listed alphabetically by organization)

- 20s Plenty (Laila Krowiak)
- Alliance for a Livable Community (Jim Wise)
- Ben Franklin Transit (Bill Barlow)
- Bike Tri-Cities (Francesca Maier)
- Boost Build (John Crook)
- Columbia Basin College (Brian Dexter)
- Economic Development Committee, City of Richland (Brad Bricker)
- Emergency Services, City of Richland (Police Department, Chris Lee and Eric Edwards)
- Parks and Recreation Commission, City of Richland (Jim Buelt)
- Planning Commission, City of Richland (Kyle Palmer)
- Red Lion Richland (Zac Carter)
- Sterlings Restaurant (Jim Sterling)
- Uptown Business Improvement District (Gus Sako)
- Washington State University (Ray White)
- Visit Tri-Cities (Michael Novakovich)
- Youth representative (Colin Berry)

Project Team

- City of Richland (Pete Rogalsky, Julie West, John Deskins, John Deskins, Kerwin Jensen)
- J-U-B ENGINEERS (Spencer Montgomery, Ben Hoppe)
- The Langdon Group (Bryant Kuechle, Caroline Mellor, Tia Schleiger)

Additional Organizations with Members Unable to Attend

- ADA Committee, City of Richland
- Bell Furniture
- Energy Northwest
- ERA Sun River Realty/ Shareldan Property Management
- Farmer's Market
- Kadlec Regional Medical Center
- Richland School District
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL)
- Parkway Business Improvement District
- Port of Benton
- Tri-Cities Regional Chamber
- US Dept of Energy - Richland Office

Project Goals Statement

The purpose of this Downtown Connectivity Study is to advance the City Council's vision for a pedestrian-friendly waterfront and downtown, while maintaining or enhancing the vehicular travel flow through downtown. The project team will develop, evaluate and prioritize street improvements in the area of George Washington Way between Williams Boulevard and Bradley Boulevard, a one-mile stretch. Street improvements are to include pedestrian, bicycle and other downtown enhancements and amenities. Ultimately the findings and recommendation will be presented to City Council for selection of a preferred approach.

Meeting Goal

To review and discuss the results of the alternative evaluation process; to reach CAC recommendation for a preferred alternative; for CAC members to determine committee consensus in support of the recommended alternative to bring to the public for feedback.

Agenda Items Summary

Welcome and Introductions

- Bryant Kuechle, The Langdon Group, presented the goals of the meeting and reiterated appreciation for the time CAC members give to the Study.

Alternative Analysis

- Spencer Montgomery, J-U-B Engineers, recapped the existing four draft alternatives. These are:
    a) *No Build* – No changes to the current roadway configuration.
    b) *Couplet* – One-way between G Way (Northbound) and Jadwin Avenue (Southbound). Traffic analysis indicates that three lanes on each corridor would provide acceptable Levels of Service.
    c) *Jadwin Option* – Jadwin Avenue becomes main through corridor; G Way becomes local 2-lane street. Traffic analysis indicates three lanes each directionon Jadwin Avenue would be needed which is good news as conceivably it could have needed four.
    d) *Road Diet* – Three lanes total on G Way and Jadwin; one each direction and a center turn lane. Remaining roadway width re-purposed for other uses.
- CAC Members asked for clarification on the initial designs presented of the alternatives. Montgomery elaborated that the Jadwin Option would have significant impacts to existing businesses along the corridor; the Couplet would impact a hotel lot but not the building. The City will undertake a more detailed design process before implementing any alternative.
- Montgomery presented the ranked results from the alternative evaluation and walked CAC members through an explanation of the scoring process. The alternative ranking result is:
    1) Couplet
    2) Road Diet
    3) Jadwin Option
    4) *No Build*
- In review of the alternative evaluation process, Montgomery recapped the criteria definitions of the criteria decided by the CAC at Meeting #2 (see Table A below) and explained the scoring methodology used for each criterion in the analysis process (see Table B below). Discussion items included:

- Montgomery clarified that while the No Build scored highest on the cost and construction criterion, this result should be understood in the context that the No Build does not offer any options to accomplish the goals of the Study.
- *Improves appeal criteri*a – CAC members shared interest to clarify the operationalized definition of the criteria, relating to the congestion of cars as a factor that affects appeal. Discussion demonstrated different ideas about whether congestion of cars positively or negatively effects appeal.
- *Parking criteria* – CAC members examined different ways to calculate opportunity for increased on-street parking by width of square feet or linear feet and whether to calculate by peak time or off peak.
- *Safety criteri*a – Members expressed a desire to refine the analysis of safety as related the impact of the number of lanes pedestrians must cross. Initial analysis indicated equal exposure between the three lanes of the Couplet and Road Diet alternatives. CAC members asked that these not be considered equivalent. Members stated that, in their experience, crossing multiple lanes in one direction felt more dangerous than the same number of lanes in two directions.
- Construction impacts - CAC members asked for clarification on the potential construction impacts of the alternatives, in particular, if sewer and other utilities would move. Project team members confirmed that utilities will not be moved.
- *Moves Traffic/Reduces Commute Time* – A brief explanation of Level of Service (LOS) was given, indicating delay experienced at intersections and that the City standard is LOS "D" for intersections as a whole. It was explained that the Couplet and Jadwin Alternative will function with acceptable LOS but that the Road Diet Alternative will cause considerable congestion. The traffic analysis shows that four intersections on George Washington Way would likely have severe congestion at LOS "F" and that this would likely result in diversion of traffic into adjacent streets serving the nearby neighborhoods.
- In discussion of the criteria overall, Montgomery and Kuechle emphasized that different criteria are created to evaluate different elements of evaluation.

- The project team and CAC concluded that the appropriate next step is for the project team to re-examine the analyses for the criteria of Improves Appeal, Parking and Safety. The project team will circle back with the CAC electronically before taking the results to the public for feedback.
- CAC members stated that overall they are comfortable with the process and feel that the project team executed a transparent structure for the CAC.

Table A. Evaluation criteria and weights from Meeting #2

Criteria	Definition	Weight
Safety	Allows for the safe movement of people in all forms (automobiles, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, disability aid) considering conflict points.	10
Improves Appeal	Attracts visitors, new residents and businesses to the downtown and the adjacent waterfront in support of tourism, small businesses, and residents' experience in the urban environment with natural features (Columbia River).	8

Mobility and Connectivity for Alternate Modes	Focus on moving "people" in all forms (bicycle, pedestrian, disabled, transit, etc.), in all directions, in support of the economic vitality, healthy living and healthy environment considering the context of the environment, specifically the ability for residents to safely connect on foot or with disability aid from nearby neighborhoods to the downtown and from downtown to the waterfront.	8
Property Acquisition Impacts	Number of properties fully and/or partially acquired.	5
Cost	Easier to implement considering right-of-way, engineering and construction of roadway changes.	4
Move Traffic/ Reduce Commute Time	Accommodates the efficient movement of north-south automobile traffic through Richland.	4
Parking	Provides opportunity for additional on-street parking and wayfinding signs to existing available parking lots.	3
Construction Impacts	Severity of inconvenienced activities during construction.	3

Note on Tables A. & B.: Criteria weighted the same were ordered alphabetically in the above table.

Table B. Evaluation Criteria as Modified to Enable Scoring

Criteria	Considerations in the Scoring Process	Weight
Safety	Number of thru/left turn vehicular conflicts; G Way characteristics (number of lanes + speed limit); Pedestrian crossing score (based off lanes to cross); Jadwin characteristics; Jadwin pedestrian crossing score; Bike lane characteristics (number of lanes).	10
Improves Appeal	Area gained for potential alternate modes; Changes in travel patterns; Congestion.	8
Mobility and Connectivity for Alternate Modes	Potential number of bike lanes; Potential for additional mid-block crossings; Potential for pedestrian refuge; Potential for bulb-outs at intersections (bulb-out = extension of curb at intersection); Potential for wider sidewalks.	8
Property Acquisition Impacts	Number of full parcels impacted; Number of partial parcels impacted.	5
Cost	Low and high range construction cost + right-of-way acquisition cost = total average cost.	4
Move Traffic/ Reduce Commute Time	Intersections with a level of service (LOS, ability to move traffic score) of E or F, considered a poor score; movements within intersections with LOS of E or F.	4
Parking	Linear feet gained for potential parking on G Way; Traffic influence on G Way (implies ease of parking use); Linear feet gained for potential parking on Jadwin; Traffic influence on Jadwin.	3
Construction Impacts	End point treatments; Impacts on G Way; Impacts on Jadwin Ave.	3

Notes on Table B.

- Shaded rows indicated criterion that the project team re-analyzed based on CAC feedback.

Enhancements Survey Results

- Caroline Mellor, The Langdon Group, reviewed the results of the CAC member survey on potential downtown, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements. This survey served to highlight the preferences of CAC members for future downtown amenities; data will be integrated with the upcoming public survey. The survey results highlighted interest in:
    - Mid-block crossings
    - Bike lanes buffered by landscaping
    - Bulb-outs (extension of curb at the mouth of an intersection)
    - Wider sidewalks
    - Increased bicycle parking
- Technology impacts - CAC members discussed the potential use of technology to adapt to congestion and the integration new transportation technology, such as electronic scooters. Project team members stated that these suggestions will be included in the final report as items for further consideration. The Visit Tri-Cities CAC representative shared that a related ordinance for the region is currently in discussion.

Action Items & Next Steps

- The project team will re-examine the analyses for the criteria of Improves Appeal, Parking and Safety. The project team will circle back with the CAC electronically before taking the results to the public for feedback.
- Upcoming public involvement opportunities: A public open house and survey will follow, likely in January. CAC members will be asked to circulate notification to their organizations and represented interest groups.