

Spring-Sandusky Interchange Improvement

Traffic Task Force

Overall Traffic Management Plan

July 8, 2003

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Introduction:

The nature and funding of the construction of the Spring-Sandusky Interchange Improvement (SSI) requires the City of Columbus to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (OSHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). Among several commitments, the MOA requires the City of Columbus to mitigate traffic impacts created by the construction of SSI on abutting historic neighborhoods as recognized by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The MOA commits the City of Columbus to work with various neighborhood and preservation-interested groups (Consulting Parties) through consensus in a public forum to establish an Overall Traffic Management Plan (OTMP). The MOA establishes a Traffic Task Force (TTF) to serve as the public forum.

The Traffic Task Force (TTF) was created in March 2000. The TTF worked with the City of Columbus and its traffic consultant, Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc. to create the OTMP. The consultant presented to the TTF in December 2001 a Final Recommendations Report.

After reviewing the Final Recommendations Report, the City of Columbus determined that although the report contained many relevant strategies to mitigate SSI-related traffic impacts, the overall scheme exceeded the City's ability to fund the recommended improvements.

Through a series of working group meetings from October 2002 through December 2002, the TTF and City of Columbus reviewed the Final Recommendations Report and through consensus achieved an OTMP that is fiscally responsible and meets the requirements of the Memorandum of Agreement. The results of the working group efforts incorporate the work performed by Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc. and further enhance the consultant's recommendations. Through cooperation and consensus, the Consulting Parties have proposed to the City of Columbus principles and implementation and a detailed implementation scheme. The City has reviewed, made changes and with agreement from the Consulting Parties presents herein its final Overall Traffic Management Plan.

Principles of Implementation

The following principles are to guide the development of the OTMP and its implementation over five years:

- Construction of street improvements should be historically appropriate; while actual historic construction materials are not required, designs and methods should replicate as closely as possible the historic nature of the streets in which improvements are made. For example, the median islands constructed along Neil Avenue in 2001 are considered historically appropriate. Refer to Table 1 for cost estimates. These cost estimates also include installation/replacement of ADA curb ramps. All construction will meet ADA requirements.
- Strategies should be undertaken to encourage through-traffic to utilize perimeter routes rather than entering the neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are defined as Italian Village, Victorian Village, Harrison West, Dennison Place and Goodale Park.
- Improvements and strategies for streets within the neighborhoods should reduce the combined affects of excessive speeds and cut-through traffic by reinforcing posted speed limits (temporary and permanent) and reinforce the usage of collector and arterial streets rather than local streets.
- The OTMP should be applied uniformly throughout the neighborhoods, avoiding unintentional shifting of traffic patterns from one neighborhood to another.
- Improvements and strategies should be consistently applied to give the neighborhoods a strong, collective identity. Such improvements and strategies should promote continuity between neighborhoods.
- Improvements should be made to streets at key intersections and other key points of decision for motorists entering and traveling through the neighborhoods.
- Improvements and strategies should have a high rate of return on investment.
- Full-time, on-street parking should generally be increased and encouraged.
- The OTMP should be fiscally responsible by utilizing phased implementation.
- Responsibility for maintenance of improvements should be clearly defined.

- The City of Columbus will construct basic improvements to the roadways that address the function of the street improvement. The neighborhoods will be responsible for providing enhanced landscaping, signage or other architectural elements. (See Exhibit 9, Steve Shinn)
- Signage will be installed to discourage truck traffic cutting through the neighborhoods. This should reduce the number of trucks on neighborhood streets and reduce the noise and congestion caused by them.

Traffic Task Force Recommendations

1. The MOA defines five recommendations the Traffic Task Force is to provide:
2. A list of priority streets needing immediate mitigation as a result of ongoing SSI construction activities;
3. A list of street intersections and methodology to evaluate traffic impacts as a result of the completion of SSI;
4. A plan to monitor traffic conditions and truck usage for at least five years following the opening of SSI;
5. A method to identify and prioritize traffic problems that are linked to SSI; and
6. An overall traffic management plan using various tools and strategies.

Recommendation 1: A list of priority streets needing immediate mitigation

Refer to Exhibits 1 – 7, which show the overall layout and location of improvements to be made to provide immediate mitigation of traffic impacts. The exhibits are organized by anticipated year of implementation starting with 2003, with a summary of all implementation plans (as shown on Exhibit 7). A tabular listing of improvements by year is provided below. Furthermore, general commitments not specific to any year are defined below.

Overall Implementation Commitments:

1. The City of Columbus will provide measures to calm traffic and reduce speed limits on framework and local streets as allowed and prescribed by state and local regulations. The City will conduct traffic studies, present data, and take further steps supported by that data, as may be necessary to reduce the posted speed limit on the framework streets, with the approval of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), pursuant to R.C. Section 4511.21 (B) and (H). These studies will be conducted on an annual basis. The pre-SSI opening study will be completed and presented by July 7, 2003. If required, all other speed limit reduction studies will be completed a month after each annual monitoring (April 2004, April 2005, April 2006, April 2007, and April 2008).
2. The City of Columbus will avoid infrastructure improvements or operational changes to traffic control devices and systems that may conflict with traffic calming and speed limit reduction goals as long as safe vehicular and pedestrian operations are maintained.
3. Following the completion of construction each year, the City of Columbus will monitor and conduct studies of speed, volume and truck utilization within the neighborhoods to measure the effect of each phase of implementation.
4. The funding level for any one year of implementation is subject to the availability of funds as appropriated by City Council.

2003 Implementation Plan:

1. Coordinate with the City of Columbus Department of Development and send to City Council for adoption an update to the Thoroughfare Plan to reclassify Third Avenue, King Avenue and Neil Avenue to lower classification status within the neighborhoods. The classification shall be reflective of proposed measures for a reduced speed limit and traffic calming on residential portions of streets throughout the historic neighborhoods. As part of the Thoroughfare Plan update, the City will research previous efforts to reclassify Second Avenue and take appropriate action.
2. Adopt a uniform ban in 2003 on through trucks throughout the neighborhoods, except on Fifth Avenue, Summit Street, Fourth Street, and High Street. Provide appropriate signage at key entry points to the neighborhoods.

3. Provide destination signage for OSU and downtown at the southern, northern (in the vicinity of Neil Avenue and 12th Avenue), and western boundaries of the neighborhoods along Third Avenue, Fifth Avenue, King Avenue, Neil Avenue, and other key trailblazing locations.
4. Evaluate and implement if warranted four-way stops at the intersections of Fourth Avenue with Perry Street, Michigan Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Harrison Avenue; Second Avenue with Perry Street and Michigan Avenue; and First Avenue with Michigan Avenue.
5. Extend 24-hour on-street parking along southbound Neil Avenue to Collins Avenue.
6. Re-mark and change signage on King Avenue between Cannon Drive and Neil Avenue to accommodate two through lanes and left turn storage at signalized intersections. On-street, 24-hour parking will be provided along both sides of King Avenue in this area that does not conflict with city permit parking restrictions.
7. Change signage on Michigan Avenue between Second Avenue and Third Avenue to allow on-street, 24-hour parking along both sides of Michigan Avenue that does not conflict with city permit parking restrictions.
8. Construct bump-outs along Fourth Street between Lincoln Street and Ninth Avenue. The neighborhood must submit a new application to the City of Columbus Development Department for Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund grant funding of the Summit Street bump-out improvements.
9. Design and construct a gateway entrance feature at the intersection of Goodale Street and Michigan Avenue Connector. The feature will consist of a median, bump-outs, and a textured pedestrian crossing.
10. Design and construct a gateway entrance feature along Park Street between the I-670 bridge abutment and Poplar Avenue. The feature will consist of a median and bump-outs. Some existing on-street metered parking will be removed to accommodate the feature.
11. Contract engineering design consultant services to design subsequent bump-out and traffic calming improvements. Contract will be structured to allow engineering design through 2005, up to the contract value of \$250,000.

12. Design a median with an eastbound bump-out on Third Avenue east of the Olentangy River bridge.
13. Design a raised crosswalk/median on Collins Avenue west of Neil.
14. Investigate one-way designation for the portion of Hunter Avenue that meets with Goodale Street.

2004 Implementation Plan:

1. Change signage on Goodale Street between Michigan Avenue Connector and Neil Avenue to accommodate on-street, 24-hour parking along westbound Goodale Street where feasible. Existing angled and parallel metered parking will be maintained along Goodale Street between Dennison Avenue and Park Street.
2. Construct the median and eastbound bump-out on Third Avenue east of the Olentangy River bridge.
3. Construct a median with two bump-outs on King Avenue at Battelle Boulevard.
4. Construct a median with two bump-outs on Neil Avenue at Ninth Avenue.
5. Construct a median with two bump-outs on King Avenue at High Street.
6. Construct a median with two bump-outs on Michigan Avenue west of Michigan Avenue Connector.
7. Construct a bump-out on northbound Neil Avenue north of Goodale Street.
8. Construct a bump-out on east side of Summit Street at Fifth Avenue.
9. Construct a bump-out on west side of Fourth Street at Lincoln Street.
10. Construct a median on Fifth Avenue west of Perry Street that incorporates a crosswalk from Battelle's parking lot to the Battelle campus. The median will be used as a pedestrian refuge island.
11. Construct the raised crosswalk/median on Collins Avenue west of Neil.

2005 Implementation Plan:

1. Construct bump-outs at end points of on-street parking on Goodale Street between Michigan Avenue Connector and Neil Avenue, where feasible.
2. Where feasible, construct up to 10 medians along Neil Avenue between Goodale Street and Eighth Avenue. Construction of the medians may continue into 2006.
3. Study and design of side street/framework elements for 2006.

2006 Implementation Plan:

1. Construction of medians will proceed until all ten medians are constructed.
2. Coordinate with COTA and construct bump-outs at end points of southbound on-street parking on Neil Avenue between Buttles Avenue and Collins Avenue.
3. Construct two bump-outs on King Avenue between Pennsylvania Avenue and Neil Avenue.
4. Construct a bump-out on north side of Buttles Avenue west of Park Street.
5. Construct two bump-outs on Buttles Avenue between Henry Street and Delaware Avenue.
6. Construct one southbound bump-out on Dennison Avenue between Lundy Street and Buttles Avenue.
7. Construct one south-bound bump-out on Dennison Avenue between Starr Avenue and Second Avenue.
8. Construct side street/framework elements from 2005 study.
9. Study side street/framework elements for 2007.

2007 Implementation Plan:

1. Review and implement a feasible signing and pavement marking plan to encourage more full-time parking along one side of Fifth Avenue between High Street and Summit Street.
2. Re-mark and change signage on Fifth Avenue between Forsythe Avenue and the alley west of High Street to accommodate two through lanes and left turn storage at signalized intersections. On-street, 24-hour parking will be provided along westbound Fifth Avenue in this area.
3. Construct a median and one westbound bump-out on Fifth Avenue at the alley west of High Street.
4. Construct side street/framework elements from 2006 study.
5. Study side street/framework elements for 2008.

2008 Implementation Plan:

The construction of the medians may be divided into multiple construction seasons ending in 2009.

1. Where feasible seven medians along Fifth Avenue between Perry Street and High Street will be constructed following determination by a properly conducted traffic study that the posted speed limit cannot be reduced, pursuant to R.C. Section 4511.21 (B) and (H), or when traffic volumes exceed acceptable levels as defined in Recommendation 4.
2. Construct side street/framework elements from 2007 study.
3. Study side street/framework elements for 2009.

Recommendation 2: A list of street intersections to evaluate traffic impacts.

Speed, volume, accidents and truck usage will be measured annually at the locations shown on Exhibit 8.

Recommendation 3: A plan to monitor traffic conditions and truck usage for at least five years following the opening of SSI.

Speed, volume, accidents and truck usage will be measured annually at the locations shown on Exhibit 8 according to the following schedule:

April 2003	Prior to construction of 2003 Implementation Commitments
September 2003	Prior to SSI Opening
November 2003	Following Opening of SSI
November 2004	Following completion of 2004 Implementation Commitments
November 2005	Following completion of 2005 Implementation Commitments
November 2006	Following completion of 2006 Implementation Commitments
November 2007	Following completion of 2007 Implementation Commitments
November 2008	Prior to December 2008 retirement of Traffic Task Force

The Public Service Director will provide a report to the SSI Traffic Task Force summarizing observations at the appointed locations shown on Exhibit 8. The report will be provided to the SSI Traffic Task Force by December 31 each year beginning in 2003.

Recommendation 4: A method to identify and prioritize traffic problems that are linked to SSI.

Following completion of a scheduled traffic measurement conducted according to Recommendations 2 and 3, the City of Columbus will analyze the data for trends in traffic volumes, speed, accidents and truck usage. If increases in these measurements from prior years are encountered, and are a result of the SSI construction, the locations will be further analyzed for possible problems and solutions. Reductions in the same measurements will also be noted. The Traffic Task Force will then recommend solutions to address the traffic problem(s).

Factors affecting the priority of any problem or its proposed solution include, but are not limited to accident frequency and type; percentage increases in speed, volume and truck usage; classification of street; width of street; complexity of the solution; and cost of the solution. The City Engineer will prepare a report summarizing the analyses and possible solutions and provide it to the SSI Traffic Task Force by March 31 each year beginning in 2004.

Recommendation 5: An overall traffic management plan using various tools and strategies.

The actions proposed in Recommendations 1 – 4 contained herein comprise the overall traffic management plan, which satisfies the Memorandum of Agreement.

The City of Columbus with consultation from the SSI Traffic Task Force reserves the right to utilize any traffic mitigation tool and strategy included in the Principles of Implementation contained herein. Furthermore, various publications may be consulted when formulating various tools and strategies including, but not limited to the December 2001 Final Recommendations Report prepared by Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc.

Approved by:

Linda K. Page, Director
Public Service Department
City of Columbus

Date: _____