



Memorandum

TO: Craig Weinaug, Douglas County Administrator
David L. Corliss, Lawrence City Manager
Mike Press, Eudora City Manager
Chris Lowe, Baldwin City Manager
Lynley Sanford, Lecompton City Clerk

FROM: Jessica Mortinger, Transportation Planner

CC: MPO Policy Board , MPO Technical Advisory Committee , MPO Regional Transit Advisory Committee, Lawrence –Douglas County Bicycle Advisory Committee

Date: February 12, 2014

RE: Review and Approve the Multimodal Studies Project Final Reports

These reports will be on the March 2014 MPO Policy Board agenda for approvals. Following MPO approval, these reports will be available for local government acceptance and/or approval.

Overview

The Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) kicked off the Multimodal Studies Project with a consultant contract in January 2013. The consultant team consisting of URS Corporation, Vireo, and Toole Design Group worked with the MPO to complete the studies.

Over the last year the project team sought input from the community through a variety of means including mobile meetings at events like a farmer's market, an interactive mapping/comment tool that allowed people to click on a map to identify a concern area and create a comment describing their concerns, two open house public information meetings where residents could talk to the project consultant team and MPO staff, numerous conversations at various committee meetings, individual conversations with MPO staff, emails sent to the MPO staff and/or consultant team leader. All of that community input has been blended with land use and transportation planning information to develop reports for the three transportation studies which comprise this project, including:

- Commuter Park-and-Ride Study
- Fixed-Route Transit and Pedestrian Accessibility Study
- Countywide-Bikeway System Plan

These three studies were created simultaneously and describe a detailed vision for greater multimodal transportation opportunities in the Lawrence-Douglas County Region. The overall goal of this planning

effort is to identify and prioritize transportation needs for commuters, pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders for the next 5-to-10 years. Implementation of the studies' recommendations will then happen as funding becomes available.

Summary Recommendations

Commuter Park & Ride Study – The study determined that the demand for park and ride facilities exists in the region as evidenced by the heavy use of the KTA lot at the K-10/I-70 Interchange, heavy use of the 19th/Haskell park and ride lot, and the observed use of informal shared use lots throughout Lawrence. A process of identifying and scoring sites across Douglas County came up with a few top sites and recommendations for them. The top sites are the I-70/North 2nd Street Interchange Area, the K-10/US-40/6th Street Interchange Area, and the K-10/US-59/Iowa Street Interchange Area in Lawrence. All three of those sites are recommended for a park and ride facility in the future. In the shorter time frame the K-10/US-59/Iowa Street Interchange Area should be explored for development of a shared use park and ride lot. The I-70/North 2nd Street Interchange Area should be studied more for development of a dedicated park and ride facility to be coordinated with local transit routes and possible future regional commuter transit service along the I-70 Corridor. The Church Street/K-10 Interchange Area in Eudora is also recommended for a shared use park and ride lot as a way to discourage and provide a safer alternative to the shoulder parking that is currently occurring regularly. The study also noted that a shared use park and ride lot in Baldwin City may also be a desired improvement in the foreseeable future.

The cost to implement some of these shorter-term recommendations, like working with a land owner to develop a shared use park and ride lot, will be minimal and basically involve City staff time to approach land owners of appropriate sites and determine if any of them would be interested in allowing commuters to use their parking areas. The P&R report has some sample agreements for this shared use arrangement. The cost to build a formal park and ride lot with many amenities and designed for bus, car, bicycle and pedestrian traffic would be significant with the specific costs to be determined once a target site is selected. This facility would be a major capital item in the City budget and will likely take several years to complete and put into use.

Fixed Route Transit and Pedestrian Accessibility Study - The existing pedestrian environment along bus routes in Lawrence is less than ideal, and this study calls out four main corridors and recommends a variety of pedestrian and transit user related improvements. The corridors include: 6th Street Corridor, 23rd Street Corridor, 19th Street Corridor, and the Naismith Drive Corridor. This study has a list of projects that could keep the City of Lawrence busy for the next few years. In addition to specific improvements that can be made in these corridors, there are some major policy recommendations including:

- Strengthen the site development review process;
- Adopt typical bus stop standards and Identify locations for bus turnouts;
- Enhance existing crosswalks and Identify new crossing locations;
- Evaluate relocating mid-block stops closer to marked pedestrian crosswalks;
- Review sidewalk replacement policy;
- Seek a dedicated funding source;
- Incorporate pedestrian improvements into larger scale roadway projects; and
- Utilizing ITS applications to enhance transit services.

Countywide Bikeway System Plan - This plan updates and expands the existing bikeway system planning that exists in Douglas County. The general policy recommendations for bikeway improvements call for building more complete networks and using sharrows to connect existing

improvements. The plan calls for the City and County to use a variety of new bikeway types, consider narrowing travel lanes to install bike lanes within the current curb to curb dimensions, and consider the mutual benefit of bike lanes and shared use paths in a corridor to meet the needs of all bicyclists. The plan specifically addresses four areas of concern including, connections to schools in Baldwin City and Eudora, the Lawrence 6th & Iowa Intersection, and the Hobbs to Constant Park Connection.

In addition to the list of specific improvements that can be made in these corridors and across the County there are some other major policy recommendations including:

- Include bike lanes on all future arterial and collector streets-even when a shared use path (SUP) is present,
- Include bike lanes when reconstructing urban arterial and collector streets,
- Use shared lane markings to connect currently discontinuous segments of bike lanes,
- Provide shared lane markings (sharrows) on all bike routes with an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) count of greater than 1,500, and
- Use narrow travel and/or center turn lanes on select streets in order to accommodate bike lanes.

The plan also addresses programs and policies other than Engineering solutions that should be implemented as part of the 5E's of the planning process for bikeway systems including: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. Three primary recommendations arise out of these areas:

- Seek a dedicated funding source;
- Hire a full time City/County Bike/Pedestrian Coordinator; and
- Install bike racks on all the fixed route transit vehicles in the coordinated City-KU transit system.

The final reports are available on the project web page at www.lawrenceks.org/mpo/study. You may also contact Todd Girdler, Senior Transportation Planner, Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization, at (785) 832-3155 and tgirdler@lawrenceks.org or Jessica Mortinger, Transportation Planner, Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization, at (785) 832-3165 and jmortinger@lawrenceks.org.