

HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS

COTTONWOOD STREET AND LOCARNO DRIVE

PUBLIC MEETING NO. 1

May 14, 2008

NOTES

Brag Doggett (DOWL) and Bob Kniefel (MOA) welcomed the attendees and stated that the purpose of this meeting is to gather feedback from the residents of the area and incorporate that feedback into a solution to help minimize the accidents at the intersection of Cottonwood/Locarno and 36th Avenue. Brad explained the purpose and need for the project as well as some possible solutions that were developed by the project team (see attached PowerPoint).

Questions and concerns from the attendees are summarized below. Staff responses are in italics.

- A light is needed at Cottonwood Street/Locarno Drive and 36th Avenue in order to make left turns during peak hours.
- Can you lower the hill on 36th Avenue to increase the sight distance from the intersections? *Brad stated that nothing is off the table at this point, but he is not sure if lowering the hill is a possibility.*
- How much right-of-way (ROW) will be required if Option 2 is chosen? *Brad explained that the options developed so far are very preliminary and this type of detailed information will not be known until a more thorough analysis is completed.*
- It was stated that the information from the previous project done on 36th Avenue should be looked at. During this project it was found that the utility documentation in the area was incorrect. This could become a problem when the current project moves forward.
- The volume of traffic on 36th Avenue is the real problem.
- The options presented thus far will not help the sight distance problem. That's what needs to be addressed.
- What is the accident data comparing the number of accidents from vehicles traveling east versus the number of accidents from vehicles traveling west? *Brad stated that the team has gathered this information and he can provide it to people after the meeting.*
- People stopping on 36th Avenue to make left turn is the problem; other drivers are going too fast and it causes rear-end collisions.

- If you close off the Cottonwood Street/Locarno Drive intersection the accidents will just shift to another intersection.
- When will the light go in at MacInnes Street? *Brad explained that a second part of this project is to look at the overall traffic circulation in the area and develop recommendations to improve arterial access throughout the area. A traffic signal at MacInnes Street may be a good solution.*
- What is the accident rate at the Seward Highway and 36th Avenue? The problem at that intersection should be dealt with first. *Bob explained that the Seward Highway/36th Avenue intersection is a much larger project than the subject project. There is an active project that is looking at the Seward Highway from 36th Avenue to O'Malley Drive.*
- The majority of the turns off of Locarno Drive are left turns. The residents need a way to make that left turn onto 36th Avenue.
- Either of the proposed solutions will cause cut-through traffic on Crescent Drive. *Brad explained that Crescent Drive will see an increase in traffic if left turns are restricted at Locarno Drive and a signal is put in at MacInnes Street.*
- A flashing yellow signal should be placed at the Cottonwood Street/Locarno Drive intersection. It could be turned off during rush hour.
- There should be an "intersection ahead" sign on 36th Avenue as it approaches Lake Otis Parkway.
- 36th Avenue should be made into a 3-lane road with a left-turn lane, similar to Arctic Avenue.
- A signalized intersection should be put in at Cottonwood Street/Locarno Drive instead of at LaTouche Street.
- If a signal is put in at Cottonwood Street/Locarno Drive it will decrease the number of accidents and slow traffic. *Bob Kniefel stated that this option will be considered, but there may be some coordination issues with the light at Locarno Drive. Steve Noble (DOWL) indicated that just adding a signal will not necessarily decrease the number of accidents.*
- What is looked at to warrant a signal? *Bob explained that there are 8 signal warrants. They include considerations such as traffic volumes, pedestrians, progressions, accidents, peak hour circulation, 8-hour circulation, etc. He explained that delay times may be longer is a signal is installed versus just waiting for a gap to make a left turn onto 36th Avenue.*
- It was stated that 36th Avenue is too straight so people speed.
- Adding a traffic light at Cottonwood Street will not work because the traffic will be backed up from LaTouche Street.

- The speed limit on 36th Avenue should be reduced. *Brad stated that differing speeds along a roadway can make a situation worse. It has been noted, and will be addressed as a part of this project, that there is a differing speed limits on 36th Avenue.*
- The safety of bicyclists and pedestrians is important and needs to be considered as a part of this project. Bicyclists need to slow down as they are coming down the hill towards Locarno Drive. They cannot see the cars because of the fence and the drivers cannot see them.
- The connectivity between the two neighborhoods on either side of 36th Avenue needs to be improved. It is important to have a safe crossing for kids to go back and forth on their bikes.
- A signal at MacInnes Street would provide a safe place for kids to cross.
- Sidewalks are being put in on Cottonwood Drive. There needs to be a signal that connects to these sidewalks for kids to use when trying to cross 36th Avenue.
- The speed limit needs to be a consistent 35 mph on 36th Avenue.
- Concerns with increase in noise levels.

Brad thanked everyone for their time and asked that people write their comments and concerns down and submit them to the project team. He explained that this project is still in the preliminary stages and the comments and suggestions from this meeting will be very helpful in developing options that will be beneficial for the neighborhoods as well as for the overall traffic circulation in the area.