

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

June 23, 2010, 9:05 AM

City Council Chambers

Members Present: Jason Wiener (chair), Ed Childers, Dick Haines, Roy Houseman, Bob Jaffe, Renee Mitchell, Dave Strohmaier, Pam Walzer

Members Absent: Jon Wilkins, Marilyn Marler, Lyn Hellegaard

Others Present: Bill Carey, Michele Landquist, Jean Curtiss, Steve King, Jack Stucky, Rick Larson, Kevin Slovarp,

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

- A. Approval of the minutes of [June 16, 2010](#)— Approved as submitted.
- B. Announcements – None.
- C. Public Comment on Non-Agenda items – None.

II. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approve the purchase of one 2010 GO-4 Parking Enforcement vehicle from White Bear West of Kent Washington, for \$22,522 ([memo](#)).— (Jack Stucky) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

Motion: The committee recommends the City Council approve the purchase of one (1) 2010 Go-4 Parking Enforcement vehicle from White Bear West of Kent Washington, for \$22,522

Jack Stucky, Vehicle Maintenance Superintendent, stated that the purchase was scheduled for FY11 and he was buying it now to save \$3,000 on the purchase price.

Mr. Jaffe made the motion to approve the purchase.

Mr. Jaffe asked what was causing the price change and whether the purchase was related to the enforcement vehicle that was damaged. Mr. Stucky stated that a lot of cities were waiting for a new fiscal year to make purchases and that the vendor had a surplus of vehicles. The damaged vehicle was fixed and this purchase is not related.

The motion passed unanimously.

III. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

1. Interlocal Agreement between the City of Missoula and the County of Missoula related to the Reserve Street / Mullan Road Intersection Improvements Project ([memo](#)) ([MDT Presentation](#)).—Regular Agenda (Gregg Wood) (Referred to committee: 01/11/10) **HELD IN COMMITTEE**

Mr. King stated that traffic mitigation for the intersection has been a key component of the Commissioners' development planning in the Mullan Road area. The intersection changes are proposed to be fully funded through the traffic mitigation fee fund from the County. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has control over the right-of-way (ROW) and any modifications.

Danielle Bolan, the state traffic engineer with MDT, stated that MDT got involved with the project around 2005, when a State Farm report listed the intersection as one of three there were concerns with in Montana. They identified crash problems at the intersection, especially with left turns off Reserve onto Mullan. The signal has a protected movement on a green turn arrow, then has a permissive turn on a green ball where they have to yield to oncoming traffic. The permissive movement was causing crashes. Eliminating the permissive movement with the current configuration would cause more traffic problems. There would be an increase in left-turn storage which would create an additional delay for left turns and would back up into the through lanes. There is limited funding and any changes need to be made within the existing right-of-way. Providing two left turn lanes is a solution, and would require removing the pedestrian island in the northwest quadrant of the intersection. MDT is here to discuss the effect on pedestrians.

Julie Wotring of MDT stated that the traditional pedestrian signal has a walking man and a solid hand, as well as a flashing hand that displays for an indeterminate time. The proposed changes include using a countdown timer which displays the number of seconds left with the flashing hand. The intersection is currently timed to a walking speed of 4 feet per second (fps), which was the old standard. The new recommended standard in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is a walking speed of 3.5 fps. MDT used the new standard of 3.5 fps for its analyses of the intersection for both existing and proposed configurations.

On the north crosswalk, a pedestrian crossing from east to west and leaving the curb as the hand starts flashing currently has 13 seconds of the flashing hand to reach the pedestrian island, followed by a 2.5 minute wait on the island before he can continue to the opposite curb. Crossing from west to east, the pedestrian will most likely continue from the island and be in the middle of the intersection when the light changes. The proposed change will remove the island and allow pedestrians seven second of the walking man plus 29 seconds on a flashing countdown timer.

On the west crosswalk going from the south to the north, pedestrians currently have five seconds of the walking man, then 16 seconds of the flashing don't walk hand. At 3.5 fps, the pedestrian almost reaches the island, then they have a half-minute wait on the island, and can then proceed. From the north to the south, they have a one minute wait on the island. The proposed changes will increase the time to seven seconds for the walking man, then 37 seconds on a countdown timer. The pedestrian will be able to make it the entire distance at 3.5 fps.

The south crosswalk island will remain and there will be timing changes to allow pedestrians to reach the island. There will be 33 seconds of crossing time on the countdown timer. Pedestrian exposure is less because there is no conflict with the left-turn only movement off of Mullan.

The west side crossing north to south will remain a two-stage crossing with a half-minute wait on the island. From south to north, there will be a one minute wait on the island. Ms. Bolan stated that MDT believes they will be improving the intersection for pedestrians with the proposed changes. They looked at different timing changes with the existing configuration at the request of the City and did not see a benefit to that.

Mr. Wiener asked if there was something they could do to limit hazards to pedestrians during right-hand turns from Mullan north onto Reserve. Ms. Bolan stated that hazards during right turns exist at every intersection and the only way to prevent it would be to have a pedestrian-only phase of the light. Vehicles are supposed to yield to pedestrians. Ms. Curtiss asked them to look into whether there was a different in sight distance because the roads were not perpendicular to each other. Ms. Landquist stated that the law is clear that pedestrians have the right-of-way and that vehicles can't go while a pedestrian is still in the crosswalk. Ms. Bolan stated that was the law but she did not have information on how often that was enforced.

Ms. Walzer asked what the walking speed was for the countdown light on Higgins and Spruce. Mr. King stated that he did not have the timing, but the operation was similar, with a walk phase and then a countdown timer.

Mr. Jaffe stated that some people can't walk 110 feet in that time. Many pedestrians don't wait the 2.5 minutes on the island before continuing their crossing. He asked why the crossing from the gas station to Wal-Mart was angled the way it is and whether they could add more time when someone actually pushes the button to cross. Ms. Bolan stated that the crosswalks were in those locations to have the cars remain where they are and allow for storage space for vehicles, which is already minimal, as well as because of the current locations of the ADA curb ramps. Adding extra time would be difficult. This intersection is in coordination with the rest of Reserve Street.

Mr. Wiener asked whether people could read the numbers on the countdown timers from the other side of the intersection. He asked for the baseline safety and operations numbers and predicted improvements in the number of crashes and length of queues. Ms. Bolan stated she would have to check on the visibility and that the technical memo on the operations contained the other information.

Ms. Walzer stated that the turn from northbound on Reserve to east on Mullan should have a red turn arrow instead of a ball. The islands should also have their own signals, like the one at Madison and Broadway.

Ms. Mitchell stated that the intersection was inadequate but that what they were trying to do was good. She asked if there was enough space for the traffic heading east on Mullan. Ms. Wotring stated there is currently some backup on Mullan Road. With the addition of a second turn lane, there will be a time savings that can be

distributed to the other movements. Ms. Bolan stated that the changes don't solve all the problems at the intersection, but they will not be making the queues worse.

Mark Schmidt, the manager at Mullan Station, asked if there would be property needed to expand westbound Mullan to two lanes. Ms. Bolan stated that the project will be done entirely within the existing right-of-way and that there would be minimal curb work.

Bob Giordano of the Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation (MIST) stated that the pedestrian crossing would be increasing in length from 79 to over 100 feet and that fatalities on Reserve Street were linked with crossings of over 100 feet. He wanted to know what would happen with bike lanes. Reserve Street is not working and there is a corridor study in the long-range plan. They should be putting emphasis on safety instead of capacity.

Mr. King stated that they would bring the item back around mid-July and discuss the actual interlocal agreement.

Mr. Houseman requested information on the accident and injury rate for pedestrians at other crosswalks and the distances of those crosswalks. Mr. King stated that they have records on accident rates per million trips through the intersections.

IV. HELD AND ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion on the sizes of grease interceptors for the restaurant industry ([Grease Interceptor PowerPoint](#)) ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Stacy Rye and Bob Jaffe) (Referred to committee: 04/21/08)
2. Consider restructuring the city's Sewer Loan Program along the lines of the recently approved change to the Sidewalk & Curb Loan Fund.—Regular Agenda ([Chapter 3.16 – Sidewalk & Curb Loan](#)) ([Chapter 3.18 Sewer Loan](#)) ([Ordinance 3344](#)) (Ed Childers) (Referred to committee: 06/26/06)
3. Review infrastructure conditions at the locations of serious and fatal traffic accidents: 2007-2009 ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Jason Wiener) (Referred to committee: 01/25/10)
4. Resolution to restore vacated Inez Street at South 2nd Street to the public trust and public use, and vacate a public access easement that was a condition of the vacation ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Carla Krause) (Referred to committee: 04/26/2010)
5. Authorize a crosswalk at Central and Stephens ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Jon Wilkins) (Referred to committee: 06/21/10)

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica S. Miller
Office Manager
City Public Works Department