



MultiModal Transportation Plan



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Public Meeting #1 April 10, 2008 Meeting Notes

The first public workshop for the Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan was held on April 10, 2008 in the Parasol Room of the Evanston Civic Center. The meeting was intended to provide an overview of the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan planning process and to guide the revisions and refinement of the goals and objectives of the Plan. It included an overview of the framework for the Plan, an introduction to Complete Streets programming and design, and a discussion regarding opportunities to become involved with the planning process. Portions of the meeting were allocated to fielding questions from the participants and for participants to view the maps located throughout the meeting room.

The following notes incorporate topics, issues, and concerns raised by the participants either through the question and answer period following the presentation or from comments gathered by the T.Y. Lin staff:

Trucks: Delivery trucks pose a problem for residents, as the stop and start movements of the trucks tend to back-up traffic and create vibrations and noise. This problem is exacerbated by out-of-town buses, especially in areas around the Northwestern University sports arenas and on campus. A participant raised concern over the placement of vertical clearance signs along truck routes. His concern is that the clearance is not posted enough in advance of the underpass.

Curb Bulb-Outs and Snow Removal: A participant raised the problem of snow removal. He cited concerns that the snow piled up from the plows often blocked foot traffic. He also mentioned that if curb bulb-outs were installed in various locations, the snow plows may be affected. This discussion was piggy-backed by numerous other comments from participants that suggested snow removal at corners in neighborhoods was difficult and enforcement of the snow shoveling was limited.

Bus Stops: Another participant asked if bus stop locations could be evaluated as part of the analysis. He cited issues with backing-up traffic due to the positioning of near-side versus far-side stops.

Sidewalk Gaps: Several participants raised a concern over the lack of sidewalks in areas within the City. For instance, the vicinity of Alden Estates, a senior center on the Northwest side, lacks sidewalks. As a result, seniors were forced to walk in the streets or on asphalt driveways.

Parking: One participant suggested that parking be removed by a percentage each year as done in Copenhagen. This would be directed at changing the behavior and creating a mode shift. Another resident suggested finding new ways to utilize the three parking garages within the downtown. She was curious as to how well they were used and how to get more to use them if they are not full. Parking for motorcycles and mopeds also should be explored as part of the

parking study. Motorcycles at times take up more than one vehicle parking space by parking at an angle; therefore providing specific spaces for motorcycles may in effect increase vehicle parking. Game day analyses are needed at Ryan Field during the football season.

Bicycle: A participant asked about the use of bicycle lanes for passing lanes. She cited the need for motorist/cyclist education as to how bicycle lanes should be used properly. Another participant raised the question of connections between bicycle facilities. A possibility to improve connections could be a sidepath, even though it typically is not used in urban areas.

Disabled Access: Numerous participants addressed issues facing the disabled community within Evanston. One concern was the use of accessible push-buttons for activating walking signals. A second concern was the lack of service for wheelchairs when using public transit. Davis Street Station was the only accessible location for disabled users. Plans are in the works for the Dempster and Main Street Stations.

Participants cited a concern over the existing para-transit system. The current system is seen as insufficient and not available to all who need it. A user of the system must first prove that they are unable to use the local transit system.

East-West Bicycle Access: Several participants noted the lack of east-west bicycle in South Evanston. They suggested that roadways were particularly poor for bicycle traffic in these directions. Howard, Greenleaf, and Oakton are the primary routes for east-west bicycle movement in South Evanston.

Bridges: Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be accomplished within the course of other construction projects. One example included Bridge St., connecting Simpson and McCormick. The budget allotment will allow for bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the cantilever structure.

Central Street Corridor: A participant asked about the coordination of the various plans that have been prepared in the past. In particular, he was concerned about the inclusion of data and goals collected for the Central Street studies. Other plans included the Lakefront Plan, Phase I for Sheridan Road, etc.

Public Transit: Participants were concerned over past cuts in services and how they affect transit in Evanston, as well as changes to existing bus routes. Numerous participants were concerned about redundancy in the transit systems, considering private services such as Northwestern University, the hospitals, and senior centers. As part of the Plan, bus stops and other transit amenities will be addressed.

Policies: Participants asked several questions regarding policy and regulations within the City. A question was asked regarding policies that promoted transit oriented development and parking requirements.

Streets: As part of the Plan, one-way to two-street conversions will be explored. A business owner raised a concern as a merchant as to how this conversion would affect sales, and if the merchants would be included in these discussions.

A concern was raised over signal timing within the City, particularly along Central Avenue. The current signal timing encourages drivers to speed in order to catch a succession of green lights.