Staff Report

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Date: 4/22/2019
Item #: 6.a.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager

FROM: Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director

SUBJECT:

Congestion Relief Task Force Action Plan.

Ward(s): Wards 1 and 8
Councilor(s): Councilors Kaser and Lewis
Neighborhood(s): CANDO and West Salem Neighborhood Association
Result Area(s): Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Infrastructure; Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community.

ISSUE:

Update on actions implementing the Congestion Relief Task Force recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY:

On March 11, 2019, City Council directed staff to begin implementing the recommended actions recommended by the 2018 Congestion Relief Task Force. The Congestion Relief Task Force - Action Items Report (Attachment 1) summarizes the recommendations and identifies actions, issues, next steps for the City and actions for Council consideration.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The Task Force agreed to 16 short-term and medium-term projects, policies, and programs that could provide benefits at specific locations or to a limited number of users. Two of the original 16 recommendations were closely related to reducing commuter trips and have been combined. Another of the original 16 contained two components regarding signal timing, one specific to optimization for

vehicular traffic and the other for Adaptive Signal Timing. This recommendation has been split into two. An additional recommendation to embark on a community dialog on acceptable travel times was added by motion of City Council on November 5, 2018.

The 17 action items recommended by the Congestion Relief Task Force:

Local Circulation

1. Construct Marine Drive NW.
2. Open Musgrave Avenue NW east of Wallace Road NW.
3. Provide a downtown circulator bus or trolley.
4. Limit left turns during peak hours on Wallace Road NW.
5. Widen Taggart Drive NW approaches to Wallace Road NW.
6. Close the north crosswalks at Front Street NE and Court Street NE.

Alternate Modes of Travel

7. Provide a park and walk/bike/shuttle service at Wallace Marine Park.
8. Develop and implement commute trip reduction programs.
9. Implement downtown parking management strategies

Traveler Information

10. Install travel time signs.
11. Improve guide signs leading up to and on the bridges.
12. Install electronic variable speed limit signs on Highway 22, eastbound, approaching the Center Street Bridge.

Other

13. Improve response to emergencies on the bridges.
14. Optimize signal timing.
15. Investigate using Adaptive Signal Timing.
16. Develop a Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.
17. Initiate a community dialog on acceptable travel times.

Several of the recommended action items require approval by or coordination with other entities, including the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Cherriots, and the Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS).

Next steps that require policy changes or funding appropriations will be brought to future Council meetings. Council will receive periodic updates on the status of the action items.

BACKGROUND:

On November 13, 2017, the Salem City Council formed a four-member Congestion Relief Task Force tasked with investigating potential ways for the City to relieve congestion in downtown and inner west Salem. The four members of the Task Force consisted of Mayor Chuck Bennett, Councilor Cara

Kaser (Ward 1), Councilor Chris Hoy (Ward 7), and Councilor Jim Lewis (Ward 8).

The Task Force completed its work in September and presented its final report to Council at a work session on November 5, 2018.

The Task Force did not reach consensus on recommending any long-term major capital improvement projects inside the study area that would reduce traffic congestion and improve vehicular mobility around the Marion and Center Street bridges.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachments:

1. Congestion Relief Task Force - Action Items Report for April 22, 2019