

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: Dec 6, 2016 **Approx. Start Time:** 3 PM. **Approx. Length:** ½ hour

Presentation Title: Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan

Department: DTD – Engineering Division / Planning Division

Presenters: Karen Buehrig, Transportation Planning Supervisor and Scott Hoelscher, Senior Planner

Other Invitees: Barbara Cartmill, DTD Director; Mike Bezner, DTD Assistant Director of Transportation and Dan Johnson, DTD Assistant Director of Development

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD? Request that the *Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan* be remanded back to the Planning Commission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: From June 2015 to July 2016 the Clackamas County Department of Transportation and Development (DTD) worked with the community to develop the *Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan (Monroe Design Plan)*. Following draft plan development, staff brought forth the plan to the Planning Commission for public testimony and consideration. At a public hearing on October 10, 2016, the Clackamas County Planning Commission recommended 5-0 not to move the plan forward due to unresolved issues. In order to address concerns raised by the Planning Commission, staff is requesting an opportunity to return to the Planning Commission for a second public hearing.

Background

The goal of the *Monroe Design Plan* is to develop a street design that improves safety and travel conditions for all modes of transportation – pedestrians, bicycle travel and vehicle traffic. Instead of applying the typical cross-section which required 60' of right-of-way (ROW), the *Monroe Design Plan* proposes a cross-section that would meet the project objectives while only requiring minimal ROW acquisition. Key project objectives include increasing active transportation options; supporting a healthy, active community; designing a street that improves safety for all users of the road and encouraging children to walk or bike to school by developing a Safe Routes to School Plan for Whitcomb Elementary. The intent is that the construction of the improvements described in the *Monroe Design Plan* will provide a safe, low stress active transportation connection between Linwood Ave and the I-205 Multi-Use Path and connect the neighborhood to employment, transit, schools, shopping and parks. A related plan, the *Monroe Street Neighborhood Greenway Concept Plan*, was prepared by the City of Milwaukie for the section of Monroe Street located within the Milwaukie city limits. The combination of these two efforts will provide a safe route for all transportation modes from downtown Milwaukie to the Clackamas Town Center.

Issues Identified at the Planning Commission Public Hearing

At the October 10, 2016 public hearing, the Planning Commission recommended not proceeding with the *Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan* at this time due to the following unresolved issues:

1. Linwood-Monroe Intersection: A similar planning effort for the western portion of Monroe Street located in the Milwaukie city limits was conducted by the City in 2014-2015. The goal of the *Monroe Street Neighborhood Greenway Concept Plan* is to create a low-stress environment that is safe and comfortable for all users. At the October 10, 2016 public hearing the Planning Commission requested clarification on one significant element of the Milwaukie plan – a proposed traffic diverter that would only allow right-in and right-out turning movements at the intersection of Linwood Avenue and Monroe Street.
2. Bio-swales and Stormwater Management: The *Monroe Design Plan* recommends bio-swales in several locations on Monroe Street between Linwood Avenue and Fuller Road. Bio-swales serve many benefits, including stormwater management and providing a buffer to separate pedestrians and vehicles. The Planning Commission heard testimony opposing the installation of bio-swales.
3. Monroe Gap: At the October 10 public hearing the Planning Commission expressed concerns over keeping the “Monroe Gap” closed to vehicle traffic and requested cost figures for improving this section for all transportation modes.
4. Thompson Section: The recommended cross section for the Thompson Road segment between 74th Avenue and Fuller Road includes 6’ foot bike lanes; 6’ sidewalks and a 5’ stormwater bioswale / buffer on one side. At the public hearing, the Planning Commission heard from residents that the proposed design for this segment “was too large” and did not fit the character of the neighborhood. Residents were concerned that improvements would extend into front yards and disrupt improvements.

Resolution on the above issues at the Planning Commission was difficult for a variety of reasons. Some, such as the diverter, were outside the scope of this process as they were a part of the Milwaukie Monroe Neighborhood Greenway Concept Plan. Some were more technical in nature and difficult to address at this conceptual level, such as bio-swales, stormwater management, and exact cross-sections along Thompson. Finally, some are just more a philosophical opinion, such as the Monroe Gap, which need to be discussed more.

While there was support for the project, there was a desire from some stakeholders and the Planning Commission to access these finer points not customarily assessed at the conceptual level.

Staff’s recommendation provides an opportunity to re-open the conversation and secure additional regional funding to provide answers to a number of questions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: In order to resolve the more technical questions, a road survey and drainage study will need to be completed. The funding for this work would need to be identified, and could possibly come from the North Clackamas Revitalization Area or from the Metro Active Transportation Project Development Fund, a competitive grant funding program opening in the winter of 16/17.

Is this item in your current budget? YES NO

What is the cost? TBD What is the funding source? N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

- **How does this item align with your Department’s Strategic Business Plan goals?**
The Monroe Plan aligns with DTD’s Strategic Plan Goals of providing plan development and public engagements services to residents, businesses and County decision makers

so that people can invest based on a coordinated set of goals and policies that guide future development.

- **How does this item align with the County's Performance Clackamas goals?** This project aligns with the County's Performance Clackamas goals by making a strategic investment in the County's transportation infrastructure. Creating safe facilities on Monroe Street and connecting roads will ensure our system in this part of Clackamas County is available to all citizens. In addition, this project aligns with the goal of ensuring safe, healthy and secure communities. Many streets in the *Monroe Design Plan* lack dedicated pedestrian facilities and ADA compliant facilities. Creating active transportation options that are safe and accessible improves community health by promoting physical activity.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS: This is an information session only.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION: The Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan was prepared with the help of community members and transportation stakeholders. Throughout the project a 15-member Public Advisory Committee (PAC) reviewed materials and provide input and advice. The PAC met six times during the plan development and included residents of Monroe Street, Thompson Avenue and Spencer Drive.

Public participation also included two open houses to give community members an opportunity to provide input on draft designs. Over 70 people attended each open house at Whitcomb Elementary School. Attendees provided their feedback via surveys for each street segment, comment cards and discussion with project team members. Public participation also included the following: an on-line open house held for two weeks after the first open house; news releases; an article in Citizen News; distribution of project flyers and postings to the project website.

OPTIONS:

1. Direct staff to remand Monroe Neighborhood Design Plan back to the Planning Commission. In addition, direct staff to secure funding for, and complete, the road survey and drainage study before going back to the Planning Commission.
2. Direct staff to schedule the Monroe Neighborhood Design Plan for consideration at a future BCC Land Use Public Hearing.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff respectfully recommends the Board of County Commissioners remand the Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan back to the Planning Commission.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Preferred Route: Monroe-Thompson Corridor

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Scott Hoelscher @ 503-742-4524

Preferred Route: Monroe–Thompson Corridor

The preferred route for the *Monroe Neighborhood Street Design Plan* (Figure 3.3) will provide a safe, low-stress active transportation connection between Linwood Avenue and the I-205 Multi-Use Path. The route assumes that the Monroe Gap will be improved to allow bicycle and pedestrian access only. The route also assumes the completion of the Boyer Extension Project, which will provide a new multi-modal connection between Fuller Road and 82nd Avenue.

Given Safe Routes to School objectives, the preferred route includes connections along 72nd Avenue and Thompson Road, which serves as the frontage road for Whitcomb Elementary. East of 82nd Avenue, the preferred Monroe–Thompson Corridor includes Boyer Drive between 82nd and 85th Avenues, and links with the I-205 Multi-Use Path at Spencer Drive. The route will provide improved connections for westbound active transportation users traveling to downtown Milwaukie and Portland, as well as eastbound users traveling to Clackamas Town Center and the I-205 Multi-Use Path.

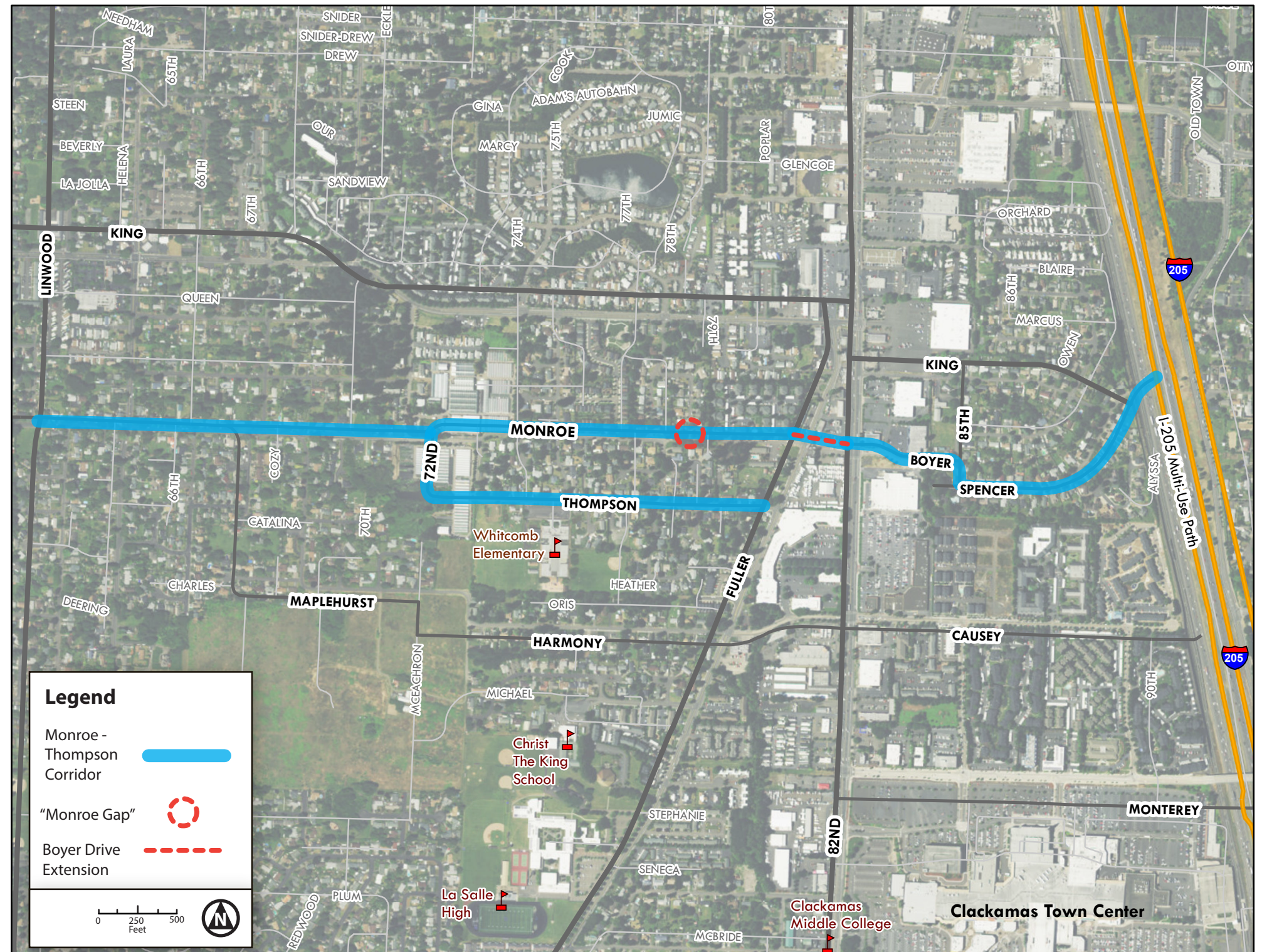


Figure 3.3 Monroe–Thompson Corridor
Map displays the preferred alignment for the Monroe–Thompson Corridor