



Steering Committee April 11, 2007 Meeting Synopsis

Committee members present: Mayor Cornett, Jan Hook, John Yoeckel, Jennifer Vogler, Willa Johnson, Bob Long, Kirk Humphreys, Ira Schlezinger, Terry Taylor, David Castillo, Patrick Ryan, Michael Laird, Terry Ott, Luisa Gomez, Dave Lopez, Jim Roth, Dan Straughan, Chuck Wiggin, Ford Price, Larry Nichols, Bill Cameron

1. Introduction

Mayor Mick Cornett and Vice-Chair Dave Lopez opened the meeting by reporting that the public meeting on the previous night went very well.

Russell Claus, the City's Core to Shore Project Manager, explained that the URS team would endeavor to finalize the location and form of key plan elements today and that the June meeting would allow for one final progress check before the final plan is developed over the summer and unveiled in late September.

2. Transportation Committee Report

Public Works Director Dennis Clowers updated the larger committee on the Transportation Committee's progress.

- A contract was negotiated with URS to undertake a Traffic Analysis for Downtown to address the changed traffic patterns caused by the relocation of I-40.
- It was suggested the City should engage a railroad consultant to handle railroad issues associated with transit center location options.

3. Implementation

Assistant City Manager Cathy O'Connor and Roy Williams, President and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, briefed the committee members on possible public and private implementation strategies.

- Assistant City Manager O'Connor stated that:
 - The city will present a G.O. Bond issue for voter approval towards the end of 2007. City Council will see the list of proposed projects for the first time on Tuesday, April 17. The list includes streetscape and landscape enhancements for the Boulevard, as well as additional improvements to infrastructure throughout the Core to Shore Study Area.
 - The City has begun to identify funding for possible land acquisition.
 - Some of the larger civic projects could be candidates for inclusion in a possible MAPS 3 sales tax initiative.
 - The City has contracted with the Chamber of Commerce to assist in attracting new retail to Downtown Oklahoma City. Mayor Cornett and a delegation from the city will be attending the International Council of Shopping Centers Convention in May to meet with potential retailers.
- Roy Williams outlined possible private implementation strategies.
 - He elaborated on the need for enhanced convention center facilities. Oklahoma City is currently considered a Tier 3 convention city. A steering committee will soon be formed to look at the steps necessary to elevate the city to Tier 2 status.
 - He strongly emphasized the need for the development community to stay engaged in the process.

4. Pedestrian Bridge and Grade Issues on I-40 Mainline

Russell Claus updated the committee on ongoing discussions with ODOT to move the proposed I-40 pedestrian bridge from its current alignment west of Hudson to an alignment with Harvey Avenue. Further discussion is needed on whether the move would necessitate a longer span for the bridge and whether it would be necessary to acquire additional right-of-way.

Mark Leese (URS) presented examples of pedestrian bridges from other cities to partly illustrate the range of options for bridge design.

5. Boulevard: Research and Streetscape

Sara Jane Maclennan (URS) briefed the committee members on design issues related to the boulevard and the new interstate.

- URS is recommending using higher retaining walls adjacent to the depressed section between Walker and Shields to buffer the noise and visual impact of the new highway. Berms would be constructed adjacent to the walls to provide a platform for landscaping. This will help to provide a green line of sight from north to south.
- The Steering Committee prefers the Type 3 Boulevard scheme, which shows three lanes in each direction and additional “slip lanes” on either side that can be used for parking while offering an additional buffer to pedestrians walking on sidewalks closest to the building fronts.
- The Core to Shore Consultant Team also recently met with EDAW, the city’s consultant on its Streetscape Masterplan, to ensure design compatibility across the two projects.

6. Table Discussions

The committee broke into four small groups for round table discussions facilitated by a Core to Shore team member. Issues discussed included:

- Boulevard
 - Consensus is for the Type 3 Boulevard. URS will work on finalizing the design concept and develop recommendations on materials.
- Pedestrian bridge
 - All four groups agreed that the pedestrian bridge should be one of the most iconic elements of the plan. Committee members communicated a desire for the bridge to be wide enough for two-way pedestrian traffic and two-way bicycle traffic.
- Interstate design
 - The committee concluded the scale and design of the retaining walls should be appreciated at high speeds while accommodating maintenance and safety considerations. The design should incorporate a design that is unique and reflects the best qualities of Oklahoma City.
- Larger Implementation Issues
 - If considered for funding from MAPS 3, support for the Core to Shore parks might be best secured by inclusion within a larger metro objective for parks and open space.

7. Group Discussions

Anthony McDermid (TAP) concluded the discussion by applauding the broad agreement that existed in all of the ideas presented. He asked committee members to use the next 60 days to circulate the ideas throughout the community and to get feedback from the constituent groups.

8. Framework Plan

Sara Jane Maclennan (URS) walked the committee members through a visualization exercise illustrating how the “Framework Plan” is constructed.

- The process begins with the two future alignments and iteratively adds parks/ greenspace, civic uses, residential uses, and retail uses.
- She emphasized that the plan is a 30 to 40 year vision that will evolve over time as new projects present themselves.
- She closed by stating other cities that have carried out similar plans have witnessed \$30 of private investment for every \$1 invested by the public.

9. Upcoming Core to Shore Work

Anthony McDermid (TAP) presented the latest hand-drawn three-dimensional images of the project area - one looking north from the river and the other looking south from Downtown.

Sara Jane Maclennan (URS) outlined the remaining products that the consultant team would be working on over the next 2-3 months.

10. Open Discussion

Kirk Humphreys emphasized that the bridge is the one opportunity to make an iconic statement.

11. Re-cap

Russell Claus reminded Steering Committee members that the next meeting would not be until June 27, 2007. A final meeting that will act as both a culmination of the planning phase and a kick-off of the implementation stage will be held on September 26, 2007.

12. Adjourn

Mayor Cornett adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.