

Information Item

Date: November 14, 2017

To: The City Manager

From: Gregory M. Turner, Assistant City Manager

Subject: Downtown Two-Way Street Conversion Update

Strategic Focus Area: Quality Transportation

Strategic Objective: No

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



The Department of Transportation was asked to provide information on the conversion of Liberty, Main, First and Second Streets from one-way to two-way.

On September 15, 2014, Council voted to support the Cherry/Marshall Alternative for the reconstruction of Business 40 through downtown Winston-Salem. The joint Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership supported this recommendation and made recommendations for improvements to surface streets to deal with the impacts of ramp closures at Main Street, Liberty Street, and Broad Streets. They were:

1. Convert streets from one-way to two-way for the streets not selected for the main interchange
2. Conduct a comprehensive study to address parking, pedestrian crossings and access to downtown businesses
3. Provide measures to slow traffic on streets with Business 40 access, and on First and Second Streets
4. Provide clear directional signs for crossings around Business 40
5. Provide pedestrian and bike accommodations around Business 40

Committee Action:

Committee	<hr/>	Action	<hr/>
For	<hr/>	Against	<hr/>
Remarks:	<hr/>		

The City commissioned DAVENPORT to conduct a study of these recommendations and present their findings on the potential impacts of the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) project on traffic patterns in downtown Winston-Salem. DAVENPORT conducted a series of community workshops to gather public input on the Business 40 project impacts. The goals of the study were to prepare a comprehensive transportation analysis to fully assess the effects of two-way conversion of Liberty/Main and First/Second. The study also reviewed improvements which may be needed as a result of the two-way conversion. The improvements included parking, pedestrians, bicycles, business access, traffic calming and directional signage. The study also reviewed access to the Ballpark and made recommendations for traffic management.

DAVENPORT completed the study and presented the findings in November 2015 which included conceptual drawings and cost estimates for implementation. The following summarizes the recommendations and cost.

Conversion of First and Second Streets to Two-way: First Street is feasible with the exception of First Street between Spruce and Main Streets and Second Street is feasible with the exception of Spruce Street to Town Run Lane. The cost for the project was estimated at \$2,500,000 which included design, right-of-way and construction. The cost was for the functional conversion and did not include streetscape, lighting, or other aesthetic elements. This conversion is listed in the unfunded capital needs section of the FY18-23 Capital Plan at a cost of \$3,000,000 to account for inflation and streetscape enhancements.

Conversion of Liberty and Main Streets to Two-way: Liberty and Main Streets can be converted to two way streets from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Brookstown Avenue. The cost for the conversion was estimated at \$3,600,000 and included design and construction. The cost is for the functional conversion and did not include streetscape, lighting, or other aesthetic elements. This conversion is listed in the unfunded capital needs section of the FY18-23 Capital Plan at a cost of \$4,200,000 to account for inflation and streetscape enhancements.

The figure below shows two-way streets in green and one way street in red. The study recommends the conversion occur after the Business 40 project is completed in 2020. One way streets have more capacity and it is important to maintain mobility through the downtown area when Business 40 is closed.



Parking Impacts: Existing deck entrances and exits are not anticipated to be effected by the proposed improvements. An additional sight distance analysis should be performed during the design phase. Additional spaces on Fifth, Cherry and Marshall Streets were identified and constructed in conjunction with the Benton Convention Center project. Curb extensions were also included to enhance pedestrian safety.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements: The report recommends installation of high visibility crosswalks, bulb-outs, and pedestrian signal upgrades to enhance pedestrian safety. The use of sharrow markings are also proposed along city bike routes with additional bike racks, signage and pavement markings as feasible.

Traffic Calming: Traffic calming will be achieved through the street conversions from one-way to two-way traffic, curb extensions, sharrow (shared lane) bicycle markings, additional on-street parking, and the proposed alignment of Main Street at Brookstown Avenue.

Ballpark Traffic Management: The study analyzed the roadway network and recommended designated routes for entry and exit during construction and after the completion of the Business 40 project. The plan includes route maps and proposes to utilize dynamic message signs to direct traffic from US 52 and Business 40.

A copy of the full study can be found on the city website at:

<http://www.cityofws.org/Departments/Transportation/Planning/Plans-and-Studies/Downtown-Street-Study>