

May 24, 2004

TO: Springfield City Council
Lane Transit District Board of Directors

FROM: Stefano Viggiano, Director of Development Services

RE: Pioneer Parkway EmX Corridor

Corridor Selection

In fall of 2001, the Springfield City Council and the LTD Board unanimously selected Pioneer Parkway, a corridor that connects downtown Springfield with the Gateway area of north Springfield, as the next BRT corridor to be developed in Springfield. This corridor was selected for the following reasons:

- ❑ The Gateway/International Way area is one of the most rapidly developing parts of our community. (Note that the corridor selection was made prior to PeaceHealth's announcement of their intent to develop the RiverBend site.)
- ❑ The Gateway area has some of the most significant traffic challenges in the community. BRT was seen as part of the solution to meeting future transportation needs of the area.
- ❑ The abandoned rail right-of-way along Pioneer Parkway provides an opportunity for right-of-way for the BRT service.
- ❑ The extension of Pioneer Parkway to the north (since named the Martin Luther King Junior Parkway) provides the opportunity for the integration of the BRT line into the new street.

Preliminary Design

The corridor was divided into three planning segments, as shown on the map: The south segment between downtown Springfield and Hayden Bridge Road; the Harlow/Gateway segment; and the RiverBend/International Way segment. For each segment, a stakeholder committee was formed that was composed of residents, business interests, property



owners, and other interested persons within that segment. The stakeholder groups met several times to discuss various options for incorporating an EmX line (the name selected for LTD's BRT system) into the street network. For all three segments, there was clear direction from the stakeholder groups on the preferred alignment for EmX. Comments and opinions from the public were also solicited through open houses that occurred prior to and following each segment planning process.

Environmental Review

Since the project includes federal funding, it is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires an evaluation of the potential impacts of the project on the surrounding environment. This is a very extensive and expensive process. Prior to starting the process, staff from LTD and Springfield sought policy review of the preliminary design in order to identify any areas of major concern. The project was reviewed by the BRT Steering Committee, the LTD Board, and the Springfield City Council. These reviews did not elicit any major concerns that would suggest rethinking the project before it proceeded through the environmental analysis.

Staff and consultants started working on preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project in fall 2003. It is expected that the EIS will not be completed until fall of 2005. The EIS will evaluate several design options and alignment alternatives for the service. The evaluation will include impacts to traffic, business, residents, air quality, noise, and many other environmental elements.

The Draft EIS will be subject to public and agency comments. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will need to approve the EIS in order for the project to proceed.

Public Review and Comment

There has been considerable public involvement in the development of the project to date. Stakeholder groups were used in developing design options for the EmX system, and open houses have been held to solicit comments on the designs from the general public. In addition, staff have met with businesses and residents most impacted by the project. As the process continues, this high level of public involvement will continue. The EIS process includes public review and comment opportunities at several stages in the process, and other opportunities for public comment will also be made available.

Funding

The Pioneer Parkway EmX Corridor is not currently funded. LTD has made a request for federal funding as part of reauthorization of the transportation bill that is currently under consideration by Congress. The federal funding could pay for up to 80% of the cost of the project. LTD has set aside the 20% local matching funds in its Capital Improvements Program, and plans to identify other local funding through in-kind contributions of land. However, the project is not affordable unless at least 60% of the cost is funded through federal sources.

It is not clear when Congress will approve a new transportation bill. The current bill expired in October 2003, and Congress has passed several continuing resolutions since that time to keep transportation funds flowing. The most recent continuing resolution expires on June 30, 2004.

Local Decision Process

If federal funding for the project is made available and if the EIS and other federal approvals are obtained, the project will be presented to the Springfield City Council and the LTD Board for final approval. It is expected that this would not occur before spring of 2006.

Implementation Schedule

With final project approval in spring 2006, it is expected that final design work will take one year and construction will take two construction seasons. This means that the EmX service along the Pioneer Parkway corridor could start as early as fall of 2008.

May 24, 2004

TO: Springfield City Council
Lane Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Mark Pangborn, Assistant General Manager, LTD

RE: Franklin Blvd. EmX Corridor

PROJECT STATUS

1. DESIGN

The project is entering final design for the portion of the corridor in Glenwood and downtown Springfield. All of this corridor is on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) right-of-way so ODOT engineers are reviewing the final drawings. There may be some minor changes to the design, but prior reviews have indicated that they design is for all intents-and-purposes final.

Springfield Public Works staff have also reviewed all designs and it appears that their design concerns have been addressed.

2. PERMITS

The permits process has a number of components. Once ODOT has reviewed and approved the final drawings, they will issue a permit to begin construction. Concurrently, Springfield will also review the plans, and upon final approval, also issue a permit for construction.

In addition to the construction permits, Springfield, LTD, and ODOT will sign an agreement on the cost sharing and maintenance of ODOT owned improvements, traffic signals, curbs, travel lanes, etc. used by LTD.

3. CONSTRUCTION

Construction on the Springfield section of the EmX corridor is decided into two phases. The first phase will cover the downtown Springfield portion of BRT, South A Street from the Willamette River bridge to the new bus station, and Pioneer Parkway East from South A Street to Main Street. South A Street will be widened on both the north and south sides from Mill Street to Pioneer Parkway East to accommodate a new EmX lane. This lane will travel on the south side of South A. All current traffic lanes will be maintained, but a median island will be added in South A at Mill Street, to slow traffic down as it enters downtown Springfield. This slowing of traffic will increase safety for pedestrians crossing north/south across South A. Actual construction will begin in June/July, 2004 and be completed by