

MEETING NOTES

By: Rebecca Brown
Date: October 12, 2005
Subject: North Main Street Corridor Study
Committee Meeting to Review Existing Conditions Analysis
Attendance: Robert Kenerson, Gail Kelly, Gary Briggs, David Cote, Sandi Duchesne, Linda Johns, Joel Dearborn, Frank Higgins, Thomas Gorrill, Rebecca Brown

The purpose of this meeting was to review the findings of the existing conditions analysis to determine whether additional calibration to the SimTraffic model was necessary and to ensure that all major deficiencies were identified. Tom Gorrill and Rebecca Brown began by giving a presentation of the work completed to date, which included a brief summary of the data collection and results of the ATR counts. Tom presented the SimTraffic model of the existing conditions and asked for input from the Committee as to the accuracy of the model. Rebecca presented the collision history and discussed patterns that occur along the corridor. Discussion items included the following:

1. At the September meeting, Jerry suggested extending the study area north to include Holyoke Street. Tom presented the revised study area, which was agreed upon by the Committee.
2. Frank questioned whether the results of the ATR count appeared normal, as they appear to show fairly constant traffic volumes throughout the day. Tom explained that on roads such as Route 1 or where there is a high retail component in the area, often the traffic volumes will begin building at 7-8 AM during the morning commute, and continue to build steadily throughout the day, reaching their peak at about 4-5 PM and then dropping off after 6 PM. Tom admitted that the graph of the volumes on North Main Street appears a little more flat than expected, but thought the volumes were reasonable.
3. In regards to the SimTraffic model, Joel noted that the model does not show much traffic on Church Street because it reflects volumes from 4:30 to 5:30 PM. However, the City Hall closes at 4:30 PM, so the majority of the traffic exiting Church Street is leaving before the peak hour of the entire corridor.
4. Rob noted that there are a number of driveways along the corridor which slow traffic. This was not reflected in the SimTraffic model. Tom explained that it would be costly to collect data at all driveways and difficult to model all curb cuts using SimTraffic. However, the speeds along sections of the corridor can be lowered in areas where a number of curb cuts exist. In addition, the model allows the user to input parking maneuvers and pedestrian conflicts, which would also slow traffic. Rebecca noted that the model currently shows pedestrian crossings at each of the intersections. However, midblock pedestrian crossings have not been included and could be used to slow traffic in some areas.
5. Linda stated that the queue on North Main Street southbound (westbound) often backs up from the intersection with Wilson Street past the intersection with Church Street. In addition, when there is no queue from Wilson Street, there is often no break in southbound (westbound) traffic in order to exit Church Street.

6. Gary noted that truck traffic northbound (eastbound) is very slow going through the Center Street and State Street intersections due to the hill and felt that this was not shown in the model. Tom noted that the model was running at greater than real time, so it is difficult to see the slow speed of the trucks in comparison to other vehicles. However, the model can be adjusted and grade exaggerated to show the slow speed of trucks moving up the hill through these intersections.
7. Joel noted that a truck turning right from North Main Street onto the JC Bridge take up two lanes due to the inadequate turning radius at this intersection. The model is unable to show a truck taking up two lanes, but the radius of the turn and the turning speed can be altered to show the difficulty a truck has with making the turn and the increased delay this creates.
8. Joel mentioned that traffic turning left from the JC Bridge onto North Main Street often backs up into the thru lane as shown in the model.
9. Joel noted that the model shows two-way traffic flow on all of Penobscot Street. However, Penobscot Street is one-way from Betton Street to Church Street. Tom agreed to revise the model accordingly.
10. The Committee agreed that trucks turning left off State Street eastbound (southbound) onto North Main Street northbound (eastbound) move very slowly due to the grade and that the model should be revised to reflect this slower speed.
11. Gary stated that North Main Street northbound (eastbound) often backs up from State Street to beyond Betton Street, however, the model does not appear to show much queuing in this direction. This issue should be addressed by inputting grades at the Center Street and State Street intersections, which will slow all vehicles going up the hill, especially trucks.
12. Linda noted that there are several potential projects in the area that could affect future traffic volumes. Tom requested that Linda mark up a map with potential development that might occur over the next ten years and get that to GPCEI to include in the forecasting of 2015 volumes.

The meeting concluded with a third Advisory Committee meeting being set for November 16, 2005 at 6 PM in the Brewer City Council Chambers. GPCEI will revise the existing conditions model based on the comments discussed above and present the revised model at the next meeting. Linda and City staff will provide a land use forecast including type of uses, size and location in the next few weeks for GPCEI's use in forecasting 2015 traffic. GPCEI will complete forecasting for the year 2015 and create a 2015 SimTraffic model for presentation at the November 16 meeting. In addition, GPCEI will prepare a list of potential improvements to be presented and discussed at the November 16 meeting.

C: Brewer Main Street Study Public Advisory Committee