

Appendix D- Policy and Design Issues for both north and south routes

SOUTHSIDE and NORTHSIDE ALTERNATE CROSSTOWN ROUTES

Project History

The concept of the Southside Alternate Crosstown Route (SACR) has been suggested since the *1969 City Master Plan* and the need reaffirmed in the *1981 City Comprehensive Plan*. The City and the Fremont Public Schools jointly commissioned the *1992 Crosstown Route Circulation Study* by the traffic engineering firm of Ed Swanson & Associates. Finally, the City and the Townships of Dayton and Sheridan adopted two plans in 2001 that discussed and recommended the consideration of the route. These were the *Fremont Area Joint Comprehensive Development and Growth Management Plan* and the *M-82 Corridor Study*.

As a part of the planning process leading up to the adoption of the 2001 Plans, the community conducted a Citizen Opinion Survey in 1999. In that survey, 86% of the respondents identified traffic congestion as a major concern in the Fremont area. This concern was also encountered during the Community Goals Workshop where participants rated roads and traffic problems as the community's greatest challenges.

The Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce commissioned an unscientific fax-back poll of its membership in 1999 and received 80 responses. When asked if they felt their businesses would benefit, be negatively affected or not affected by a reduction of traffic volumes on Main Street, 73% felt that the project would have no negative affect on their business. Of that amount, 24% felt their businesses would benefit from a reduction of Main Street traffic by improving traffic circulation and pedestrian safety. When asked about the importance of lessening the negative impact on local residential streets and providing better access to other key areas of the town (hospital, schools, industrial park and Fremont Lake), 51% responded that this concern was of great importance to them; 31% felt it of little importance, while 18% had no opinion.

While the route has been proposed for over three decades, misconceptions of the objectives of the project still persist. Prior to the 2001 planning process, there were only a couple instances of public discussion of the project. These centered on specific instances where the SACR was involved, such as the vacating of Oak Street for the hospital, the construction of Locust Street and Industrial Drive in the Fremont Industrial Park and the construction of the access road (Cedar Street) for the new Pine Street Athletic Complex parking lot.

To help clarify the project for the community, the City Council prepared a summary of the "Objectives for the Construction of the SACR." These objectives were also included in both the new *Joint Plan* and the *M-82 Corridor Study*. The two Plans also contain newly created objectives for the construction of the Northside Alternate Crosstown Route (NACR) (Hemlock Street and Market Avenue.) Copies of the objectives for both routes plus the route location map are attached hereto. According to the Council adopted summary, both crosstown routes are intended to perform the following functions:

- Improve traffic flow for both local citizens and visitor throughout the City.
- Provide a designated truck route for both local and through-shipping of raw & finished goods.

- Furnish access to other key areas of the City, alleviating stress on overloaded residential streets.
- Improve safety and reduce traffic stress for pedestrians and motorized vehicles by reducing congestion on M-82.
- Create a utility corridor for the enhancement of both public and private utility services.

Recommended future study efforts

Through the *1992 Swanson Study*, a 1994 study conducted by the Eastern Washington Intermodal Transportation Study (EWITS) and previous city master planning efforts, several criteria can be applied to the proposal of the SACR and NACR while they are being studied for implementation:

- The routes should be as close to the Central Business District (CBD) as possible
- The routes should allow for proper, advantageous and planned access to major traffic generators, such as the hospital, schools and the CBD
- Any alignment should minimize impacts on the environment and existing homes.
- The routes should alleviate and minimize negative traffic and safety impacts to established residential areas
- Design of such routes should accommodate advantageous and safe pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle crossings
- Zoning around such routes should minimize commercial development and minimize the number of accesses from private property adjacent to the routes.

The *M-82 Corridor Study* offers a list of issues and possible remedies to deal with the concerns of positive or negative affects that the SACR and NACR would have on the CBD.

The corridor study specifies a group of reasonable options for dealing with the affects of increased traffic on the M-82 corridor. These solutions should be looked at as a "toolbox." One proposal is not going to solve all of the community's traffic and access problems. There is no up-to-date information on the origin and destination of business or retail customers, local residents and visitors to this area. This data would be useful in marketing the CBD and in choosing an alignment for any alternate route. This study could be done in conjunction with the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce.

As a result of the customer origin/destination data and the lessons learned from the EWITS study, an aggressive marketing strategy should be developed and implemented to assist with any possible detrimental affects any traffic diversion might cause. The economic impacts should, however, be carefully balanced with quality-of-life benefits to not only the Downtown but to other neighborhoods with existing cut-through traffic.

Origin/destination data must also be collected for automobile and truck traffic along the corridor. This would provide useful information for the further study of any alignment.

Recommended Implementation Steps

In order to implement a large undertaking such as the construction of the SACR and NACR, the community must consider numerous strategic milestones and steps. These would help ensure that public resources are used wisely, efficiently and effectively. The following table summarizes the recommended steps and the staff and professional services required to implement the projects. After Council consensus on the implementation steps, staff will need to prepare a project timeline and project monitoring system to keep the projects on schedule and to ensure necessary parties coordinate and not duplicate their efforts.