

Brookings Transportation Steering Committee
January 12, 2015

The Brookings Transportation Steering Committee meeting was held at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2015 at Brookings City & County Government Center with the following members present: Keith Corbett, Daryl Englund, Jacob Mills, Michael Bartley, Jim Morgan, Bob Hill and Al Baker. Jason Harms appeared by teleconference. Les Rowland was absent. Others present included: City Manager Jeff Weldon, Community Development Director Mike Struck and Communications Specialist Laurie Carruthers. Chair Corbett called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Approval of minutes. A motion was made by Hill, seconded by Bartley, to approve the December 1, 2014 minutes. All present voted yes, motion carried.

Consideration of the 20th Street South Improvement Project.

Community Development Director Mike Struck provided a summary of his memo. He advised that the City cannot move forward without an engineering design on what structures are needed, an environmental study as well as an interstate justification report. The Federal Highway Administration has the final say on the project, whether it is an interchange or an overpass. Hill asked if the city needs an environmental review if it is only an overpass. Struck advised that it depends. The traffic counts have not been updated since 2011. Bartley asked if we would need to start over again with all the counts. Struck advised that the numbers will need to be updated and the city may need additional counts from 22nd Avenue, 32nd Avenue and 34th Avenue. Baker asked if the City Council is waiting on the Transportation Steering Committee for a decision. Weldon advised that the City Council is looking for a recommendation from the Committee on the 20th Street S Project.

Corbett reminded the Committee that they will meet with Secretary Bergquist on January 21st. Weldon commented on the collaboration in Sioux Falls for the 85th Street Project (county road) with an intergovernmental agreement and a public/private agreement. Several of the property owners are assisting with the studies.

Jason Bowes from Bowes Construction, Inc. explained their business process. They always have a plan to leave something pleasing for Brookings when completing a project. With the initial interchange concept, Bowes would be giving up 14 acres of land. Bowes understands an interchange is important and presented an example of the 10th Street interchange in Sioux Falls as their preferred design. At some point, Bowes intends to move the asphalt to the eastside of the interstate, if they have appropriate access. With a new interchange at 20th Street S, much of the truck traffic along 22nd Avenue and 6th Street could be alleviated. Bowes provided another example of an interchange reconstruction in Canton, and the cost was \$7.8 million. With Brookings starting new, the cost would likely be less. Bartley asked if a 32nd Street interchange would work with Bowes. Bowes advised the 32nd Street bridge was built in 1966. A few years ago the bridge was damaged for the entire summer and Bowes Construction was cut off. He does not think a 32nd Street interchange is feasible. Bartley asked if they would rather see an interchange or an overpass at 20th Street S. Bowes replied definitely an interchange. Baker asked Bowes what his expectations were for the width of the bridge. Bowes replied 52 feet wide, 3 lanes with 8 feet shoulders. Englund also added a bike path could be a possibility. Englund estimated the cost at \$10 million with the environmental study, engineering study and the interstate justification report.

Regan Rohl owner of Western Estates advised that there is no quick way to travel to the new development south of town via the interstate. The residents on this part of town are inconvenienced. Where the houses go, so should the cars. The only hindrance is money. He believes there is development potential with the land owners all in favor of the 20th Street S interchange project. This project also covers a safety aspect with diverting truck traffic.

John Mills owns smaller pieces of land on the west side of the potential interchange. He believes there are cooperative efforts from the land owners, and the city should take this window of opportunity to develop the land. An interchange provides business potential as well as access to the schools and expansion south of town. There is also sewer structure already in place.

Lyle Bowes from Bowes Construction, Inc. commented that the SDDOT could use the 20th Street S interchange if it was in place before the 6th Street overpass construction. He warned the Committee that business can be shut down due to a construction.

Hill advised that the county would not prefer the TIF concept for this interchange/overpass project.

Corbett acknowledged that the Committee has decided on an interchange rather than an overpass. Now they need to meet with Secretary Bergquist to look at the state infrastructure.

Bartley commented the interchange would be the best option, but it will not rapidly happen. Realistically, the project will not be done before the 6th Street project, more likely 3-10 years. The next step would be to make a recommendation to the City Council, arrange funding and participation with landowners. The project will likely be self-funded between the city and county.

Baker remarked that all parties are interested in the interchange option and the Committee should make a recommendation as soon as possible in order to find avenues for funding the studies to keep the process moving.

Englund stated that during the meeting on January 21st with Secretary Bergquist, the Committee members should wait for his comments and ask what the next steps are.

Weldon advised that the DOT is inclined to promote transportation and safety, not economic development. The project is in the joint jurisdictional area. Hill commented that a conditional use permit would be required by the county.

Struck pointed out the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan encourages commercial development at the intersection of 22nd Avenue and 20th Street. There was no discussion of commercial development on the eastside of the interstate. However, the city should look at opportunities to make use of the existing structure and sewer line.

Bartley commented the county is undertaking a comprehensive plan and there should be a joint jurisdictional meeting with the city and county after the plan is done. Hill advised the plan from 1985 is not comprehensive. Struck indicated the joint jurisdictional area is included in the city's comprehensive plan.

Englund summarized the consensus is for an interchange. He asked Hill to check with the county and contemplate a plan to advance the project forward. Weldon and Corbett confirmed the City Council's support. Hill will check with the County Commission at their meeting on January 15th.

Weldon advised that the 85th Street project in Sioux Falls is a model project for state partnerships. The Committee does not know the funding sources. Banner Associates estimates an interchange to cost \$15 million and an overpass \$7 million.

Morgan asked if anyone had information on the Spearfish project? Bartley commented that if you look up the Spearfish interstate project on the internet, you will get details of the steps.

Regan Rohl asked about the great differences in the project estimates. Is it all speculation or will a bid be let to confirm the numbers?

Englund responded that the numbers would be finalized in the preliminary design. Weldon advised that the numbers could change drastically due to the fact there are wetlands near the project.

Morgan asked about the golf course regulations. Struck responded that the regulations fall under the National Park Service Guidelines. Once the interstate justification report is complete, it usually takes 8-10 years to complete a project. The penny sales tax could be an alternative funding source.

Bartley advised the state's participation level is likely related to the engineering study. Englund confirmed and asked for an outline of the talking points with Secretary Bergquist. Items identified include: 85th Street project funding (state/local/private); state infrastructure financing loan; federal gas tax increase; state tax increase; and what are the next steps for 20th Street South?

Baker commented that the 20th Street South interchange would lessen the traffic on a state road (6th Street), which could be reasoning for state funding of the project. Morgan asked if the 6th Street project could dovetail into the 20th Street South project. Weldon did not recommend this approach as it would likely delay 2016 construction for the 6th Street project.

Schedule next meeting. The Committee decided to reschedule the February meeting to the 23rd due to the President's Day holiday. Morgan cannot attend on February 23rd.

Adjourn. A motion was made by Bartley, seconded by Hill to adjourn. All present voted yes; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Submitted by Laurie Carruthers.